THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

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THE BURDEN OF THE DAY

A GREAT French poet has written a book to reveal how much of the Divine there is in suffering. The magnificent unearthliness of the Saviour's promise that a blessing should rest upon those who mourn or are in pain is now sometimes obscured by the flutter of scientific recipes which hold out a promise of a different sort, futile but appealing. Who can doubt that the virtue of American civilization is not primarily a matter of inventions or appliances but rather the abiding generosity with which the successful have striven to bear other men's burdens? Andrew Carnegie became an illustrious citizen when, after having carried a heavy job to its conclusion, he bethought himself of the good which his earnings might do. We believe that in this respect he is representative of America. Ours is, in some respects, a narrow and materialistic civilization, but it has always been redeemed by sympathy with suffering—by a haunting memory of the Beatitudes which Christ hung like so many flags on the house of humankind.

Yet there are some forms of misery, or even despair, to which we are singularly callous. The genuinely tragic figure is not so much the down-and-outer who, accustomed to roughing it, can find a meal and a bed at some charitable place. Far more impressive and appealing is the man who has strained every nerve to give a little family some place of safety and who then, as the result of an accident, discovers that his powers are inadequate to the task. Struggle as he may, the slippery hillside of life flings him back at every step, and he sees the hearth-fire quenched by fogs which rise from the abyss of failure. We have been told of many such cases recently by people who have observed them. There is, for instance, the story of a man whose hard work in a tailor shop brings in $50.00 a week. His little boy fell while playing; and as a result of inefficient medical attention, it becomes necessary to resort to treatments which cost six times more weekly than the father can earn. Where all was modest comfort before, privation and ever-mounting indebtedness now hold sway. And the man, tortured by a sense of impossible responsibility, can expect no help from a world which has apparently never dreamed that such as he might exist. In the Christian

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manner he drags his cross after him to his own Calvary; but possibly he is not more heroic than the rest of us, and the burden may finally be tossed aside with a bitter laugh.

Can one think that the angels and their star hovered over Bethlehem for any reason more sacred than the Divine will to cleanse mankind of the sin of indifference to the misery of others? Ours will never be a Christian country, it is salutary to remember, until the seven fundamental standards have been accepted in practice. By comparison, the conceptions of order and dignity, property rights and social station, all of them bequeathed by classical antiquity, are of secondary importance. As a people we have consistently manifested a desire to realize this ideal. But, until social provision has been made for just such conditions as the one outlined here, there will remain a vast and hideous void. It seems to us that one of the major objects of charity ought to be the stability of homes. Whatever endangers them is the foe of all of us, and everything that removes unnecessary suffering from them will continue to bless us all a hundredfold in the future. Since the whole story of Christmas is so intimately bound up with domesticity, why not give the matter some attention now?

WEEK BY WEEK

DIPLOMACY can still be defined as the only form of government not conducted in accordance with parliamentary rule. When Representative Fred A. Britten dispatched his fervent note to the British government, suggesting a disarmament conference between members of Congress and members of Parliament, he evidently overlooked the dictionary as well as the constitution. His intentions were no doubt of the best, and there is some reason why every citizen might well grow a little impatient over the slow decline of the fortunes of Mars. But since history clearly states what diplomatic relations are, and since the law of the land has declared that only the President is authorized to "direct" the language of the State Department, his epistle was merely out of place. We confess that the spectacle of a House of Representatives shaping and controlling a foreign policy would give us no pleasure. Foreign affairs are one theme upon which the nation must think and act as a whole; the "business before the House" is usually dotted with references to hamlets, towns and cities. At any rate, everything had turned out very well. Premier Baldwin wrote an excellent note, found out how to send it without hurting anybody's feelings, and supplied Parliament with a topic for conversation. But if somebody congressional will "do a Britten" regularly, it may prove to be a most interesting session.

The Congress Opens

THE President's annual message may have seemed a bit soporific, but it did supply many things to reflect upon. Of course Mr. Coolidge could not abstain from his usual travelogue, "See America First!" But after having riveted all eyes upon the wealth and virtue piled up in the country, he settled down to business. The budget figures not only indicate that tax collectors will carry on at the present momentum, but also that there is no money for various projects. Fifteen cruisers are needed for "replacement or defense," but the Treasury is without funds to subsidize any system of surplus financing. Thus congressional defenders of the farmer must prepare to raise funds for any exploit that requires government assistance. It goes without saying, however, that the Washington building program is coming along nicely, and that the Kellogg pact merits the endorsement of every citizen. The spaces beneath the Capitol dome have long since been strongly inoculated with thought.

PROHIBITION enforcement is one of the roughest spots which makers of the 1930 budget have to smooth out. It is believed that several more than forty millions will be appropriated for the various branches of this super-detective service, which (as is well known) requires an army, a navy and a farflung intelligence division. Speaking on the subject, Commissioner James M. Doran admitted that a really effective attack upon bootlegging would require $300,000,000 annually. Ostracized beverages still get in from Europe and the West Indies, there is an abundant domestically manufactured product, but "the largest quantity of liquor enters over the northern land border." This the Commissioner, like the Anti-saloon League, would like to halt summarily and effectively. But there are not many Republicans daring enough to suggest that a third of a billion dollars ought to be spent in such a cause. Mr. Coolidge's "prosperity and economy" slogans have dyed the country's mental landscape so deeply that even the crusaders themselves have been tinted—or tainted. One surmises that for the present, at least, enforcement will not move off the narrow gauge track.

Budgeting Prohibition

IRELAND, as is well known, has legalized a system of literary censorship. For months a fierce debate regarding the project has raged in many journals, and the most notable Irish writers have uttered their say. The law seems to have had its origin in a desire to prohibit birth-control propaganda and certain types of sensationalist journalism. But somehow the authorities gradually succeeded in extending their dominion over printed literature in every form, with the result that the world now witnesses a remarkable test case of censorship in action. News that the works of Dostoievsky, Tourgeniev and Bernard Shaw have been burned in some places by order of the government is not wholly pleasant reading. History tells us plainly that every severe astrin-

Irish Censorship

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gent action is followed inevitably by a no less impressive reaction of laxity. More humorous are some parliamentary speeches in which excited prohibitionists of literature confused authors and titles in a way that recalls Mrs. Malaprop. We are of the opinion that what was originally a sane and advisable measure has simply got out of control. Irish common sense may be depended upon to restore the balance, and the current experience may prove educative. Of all conceivable literary juries, the worst is surely that manned by politicians.

A Fantasy in Families

BECAUSE Mexican workmen and their families cross into the border states at harvest time, the Immigration Study Commission is tremulous. It is not especially concerned over the immediate effect which this invasion will have on wage conditions in the Southwest. Strangely enough, it is not even worried about the actual numbers of the seasonal immigrants. What it views with a very considerable alarm is the fact that the 322 incoming automobiles filled with Mexican laborers and their families which were counted on a California highway in one week carried with them an average of nine children each. The Commission speculates: "If one week's automobiles carried 322 families, and if the train and stage influx was the same, at such a nine average we have admitted the forbears of 469,476 peons to compete for food with 17,388 great-grandchildren from a similar present-day American group." It is a harrowing prospect, and we trust that the Commission will not betray us by neglecting any means to prevent its realization. We recommend that it present these remarkable statistics to Congress at the first opportunity, and that meanwhile it continue its investigations with the same praiseworthy diligence which resulted in the recent disclosures.

IN THE event that the Commission should fail to arouse the representatives of the public to what is going on along the southern border, only one item in this week's news will give the future any satisfaction. And this is the announcement that Professor Emil Truog of the University of Wisconsin has discovered the cause of sour soil in the presence of alumino-silicate, an inorganic compound which has heretofore never been isolated. The problem has occupied the attention of leading agronomists for the past fifty years, during which time the theories of absorption and of unknown electrical phenomena have been most generally adhered to. Professor Truog deserves our thanks as well as our congratulations, for in ten years, in five perhaps, large areas now unproductive may be bearing crops as the direct result of his work. Men who make the desert bloom or grains ripen on land long thought exhausted seem to arise at most unfortunate times for those who perennially fear over-population. At any rate the Immigration Study Commission will be inclined to recognize in the Madison scientist one of the heroes of this generation.

Mr. West Is Secure

VICTORIOUS Republicans in the Senate show the old recalcitrancy when they consider the appointments of Calvin Coolidge. It was freely predicted at the time the President appointed Roy O. West to succeed Dr. Hubert Work as Secretary of the Interior that the Senate would not confirm his selection. Even some of the staunchest Coolidge supporters expressed surprise that he should place in the Cabinet post having supervision over government lands and water-power sites a man so intimately connected with the Insull interests. The President offered no explanation. Like Mr. Hoover, he does not often explain the reasons for his appointments; and in view of his well-known determination, it is unnecessary for the Senate to debate the future of the new Secretary should they not confirm his naming. Mr. West, confirmed or unconfirmed, will continue under recess appointment until March 4. Meanwhile, as member of the Federal Power Commission he will consider the application of the Cumberland River Power Company, an Insull property, for rights to develop Cumberland Falls power. Nor need the Republican senators lift their eyebrows that Mr. West, a large shareholder in the Insull companies, did not refrain from participation in the Commission deliberations. He knows very well what the White House attitude is toward water-power development.

Capital for Roumania

AFFAIRS in Roumania today are in a too unsettled state to permit any great certainty in predicting its future course. The new government, captained by Juliu Maniu, is itself not sure of a long existence. But it is at least safe to say that, if it is continued in power by a working majority, the country will benefit tremendously by the ascension of the peasant party. In a manifesto decreed by Maniu, the government has taken a wise step toward its entrenchment by declaring its willingness to forget all former enmities and promote future friendships. This is at variance with the policies of other governments, which have sought to continue themselves by merciless opposition to the minority groups. This conciliation will in no wise affect the fundamental policies of revising the Bratianu laws to enable foreign capital to enter the country, and of making all other branches of production subordinate to agriculture. The manifesto is judicious in its decision to decentralize the government by the establishment of far-reaching local autonomy, with elective district councils. To open Roumania so that foreign capital may participate in the exploitation of the kingdom's natural resources has been an uphill fight, which the royal family never won against the powerful Bratianus. It remains to be seen if Maniu will be the victor.

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IN RULING on a dispute between a physician and his patient over the charges of the former for medical attendance, the civil tribunal of Montpellier, in France, decided that while the physician alone is "competent to fix the fee for his service, the amount of that fee should be determined by the patient's ability to discharge the same without undue embarrassment." The case which led to this decision is as familiar in this country as in France. Almost everyone has personal knowledge of poor families which cannot seek eminent service, and which consult, even in the gravest emergency, physicians whose fees will not be beyond their slender means. And many, too, are aware of especially devoted parents who have mortgaged their earnings for years in order to secure the best medical attendance for their children. No one will argue, of course, that specialists are too highly paid; hardly any price for their services could be called excessive if the patient were able to meet it without strapping himself. But in view of the needs of the poor, the importance of the Montpellier court's decision will be understood. It may encourage a similar precedent in American jurisprudence.

Fees in Montpellier

A NEW policy in aiding the cure of narcotic addicts has been inaugurated by the special committee in charge of the clinic at Bellevue Hospital, New York City. The method of the cure is not new, being the narcosan treatment which has been tried on city prisoners at Welfare Island. Although no longer used in the prison, narcosan has been highly praised by many who took it and were discharged as cured. Some physicians objected to its use because the prisoners had no volition in the matter. The Bellevue project, which purposes to employ narcosan, is free of this objection since its departure from past procedure lies in an offer of free treatment to anyone who wishes to take it. At no time in its course will the patient be considered a prisoner, although he will be admitted to the ward only on condition that he remain until the treatment is completed. Since such a method removes the obnoxious elements of conviction and imprisonment, it is certain to prove a decided boon to this group of unfortunates, who are fortunate in the paradoxical sense that their vice can be made so revolting to them that they perforce abandon it. The experiment will be followed with interest.

Patients and Prisoners

ANYONE inclined to exclaim with sorrow over the fact that 194,000,000 acres of federal lands are still unappropriated may be assured in the annual report of the Department of the Interior that these areas are being put to a worthy use whenever that is possible. Small islands, for example, have been found most suitable for the location of fur farms, since the waters form a natural barrier to the animals, and many have been leased for this purpose. A number of cities and towns have taken leases on public lands in order to establish air ports, the Department stipulating that free and unrestricted use is to be granted to all aircraft operated by agencies of the United States, and that full control may be assumed by the government at any time for military purposes. Most difficult is the distribution of the arid and semi-arid public lands, a problem which has only partially been solved by the dry-farming act, allowing 320-acre entries, and the 640-acre entry law for stock raisers. As the areas in which homesteads of these sizes will support a family have been greatly reduced, the Department intends to ask Congress to permit the acquisition of parcels of 1,280 acres under the provisions of the stock-raising homestead law. This would have the advantage not only of putting new lands to some use, but of stilling the quarrels which have arisen over the usurpation of the public lands for grazing purposes, in case there is too much opposition to the proposed law for governmental supervision of the ranges and the recognition of present usurpers under a leasing system. The situation is a very difficult one and must be managed without recourse to the iron hand. The stock raisers cannot be ruined; and unless their holdings are increased they must begin to make some return to the government. Likewise there must be equality of privilege for all on the range, a status which has not prevailed heretofore. So very reasonable are the Department's proposals to clean up the situation that it will be a very extraordinary circumstance indeed if Congress should hesitate to take favorable action upon them.

New Uses for Old Lands

AS MIGHT have been expected, the attitude of the Church in refusing indemnity for the losses suffered in China during the recent period of upheaval has met with the warmest approval of the Chinese press. Here, the papers comment, is an earnest of the sincerity behind the missions. An article in Chen-pao declares: "The Supreme Pontiff has given very precise instructions that the Catholic missioners shall not demand any monetary indemnity for the death of their members killed during the turmoil of the last few years. The missioners thus show themselves disposed to sacrifice all, even life itself, for the salvation of the souls confided to their care. The Italian government, however, to assure the protection of its citizens, has exercised its right and China has promised to turn over $30,000 as indemnity for the death of Father Vanara. The Minister of Italy has undertaken to distribute the money immediately to Italian charities." A note from the Fides Service explains that Father Vanara was an Italian Jesuit professor at the Ricci School in Nanking who was killed, with a French Jesuit, during the taking of Nanking by the Nationalists.

Missionaries for No Indemnity

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The Carved Initial

IT IS of no advantage, perhaps, to question the assertion of the Wisconsin Journal of Education in its current issue that the schoolroom practice of decorating desks with carved initials, scrolls and the figures of men and beasts has largely been abandoned. But the Journal's reasons for the passing of this happy custom are worthy of attention. It argues, in short, that "idle hands mean mutilated furniture," that pupils of today are too busily engaged in work to court artistic inspiration, that formerly there was no attempt to suppress the error that public property is no one's, rather than everyone's, and that the cleaner walls and finer furniture of the modern schoolroom of themselves rebuke the temptation to deface. "The public opinion of any student body deeply resents violation." The summary, it will be observed, is in line with all that is best in modern educational psychology, but anyone who grants the force of the first part of the argument cannot fail to see that it does not hitch with the latter. Work certainly may be the salvation of furniture, as it is of men, but here is a very good reason for supposing that even the finest furniture would not be proof against the fancies of idleness. Indeed it is possible to believe that an immaculate desk top may be more irresistible to the hand that guides the knife than one which might haughtily dare a newcomer to place his efforts beside those of some master of the past. Our artistic instincts may be suppressed in a routine which calls for a certain amount of work to be accomplished every fifteen minutes, but human nature does not change so easily that a coat of paint has the power to transform the playboy of today into tomorrow's model of the quiet civic virtues.

Financing Air Routes

MEASURES necessitated by the advances made by aviation in the past year are piling up in Congress to such an extent that the less air-minded members must find themselves bewildered at the size of the figures involved. The Post-Office Department will need double its 1928 appropriation of more than $6,000,000 to pay air mail contractors, and even more if it is successful in obtaining authority to operate additional air mail lines to foreign lands. Of course there will be appropriations to cover the five-year program for building up the air units of the army and navy. As air cost, too, must be counted the item in the cruiser bill passed by the House last session and now pending in the Senate, which proposes a new airplane carrier costing $19,000,000. Among army fliers, greatest interest is being evinced in the Furlow Bill, pending in the Senate, which would create a special promotion list for the Air Corps. When the sums which accompany these projects are added up, the seventy millions or so which comprise the grand total for aeronautics in the Post-Office, Navy, War and Commerce Departments for the fiscal year ending next June will look very small. Among miscellaneous measures pending is one authorizing a fund of $100,000,000 to aid commercial aviation, and on top of this is a message from President Coolidge prefixed to the annual report of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics which asks for "continuous prosecution of scientific research in order that progress may continue at the maximum rate."

INVENTORY OF HAPPINESS

THE foreign press service of the New York Times describes the French newspapermen who have returned to Paris from their election duties in the United States as enthusiastically writing on the happiness of America, to them a more amazing thing than the spectacular rise in stocks, which holds second place in their interest. They find it hard to grasp, because it is so different from anything to which they have been accustomed. "In France, which is reputed gay, the majority of the people are always downhearted. London even in its best moments is a city of gloom." But in America the journalists found persons who were happy day in and day out.

We shall not inquire at this time into the possibility that our French friends have mistaken a certain stridency in our voices, a swagger in the way we bear ourselves, a creed of standing up which we have developed and to which we adhere, a principle that optimism is the best policy, for something more real and profound. We are too gratified to learn that in the view of our severest critics we are a happy people to discount the depth of their penetration. To the more lugubrious who insist that we have fooled these newspapermen entirely, the reply is made that there is no end of satisfaction in working a good bluff. And as a postscript may be added the assertion that we cannot have fooled them entirely. Beside the alleged melancholia of France and England, we must be comparatively happy.

Let that be insisted upon. It may carry the psychological benefit of doing away with imaginary doubts and illusions. It may clear the air for us, so that we may recognize which are our true and solid bases for joy, and which our persuasions to mechanical laughter; which our phantom foes and which the genuine obstacles we encounter in the pursuit of happiness. So when Henri de Kerillis tells his fellow-countrymen that everyone over here is as playful as a boy scrambling for pennies he is doing us a service which is not negligible.

We wonder, now, what are the justifications of that manner which so impressed the Frenchmen. We would be inclined to put forward our abundant prosperity, except for the fact that they themselves dismiss it as an explanation. Governor Ralph Brewster's recent assertion that "organization for prosperity is the next lesson that America may teach the nations of the world," means nothing, then, to them. What they are looking for is a lesson in the health of the spirit.

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How can we help them when they so firmly put down our first conjecture? We are constrained to point to the liberty, equality and fraternity which are characteristic of life in our nation, but these are principles to which the French republic is committed by every inscription on its monumental stones. Checked again, we must take refuge in the possibility that we are more devoted to the observance of these principles than our sad-eyed brethren over seas.

Beyond this we cannot go. A quick survey of conditions and affairs will justify a refusal to look further for the sources of our optimism. As a nation we are among the most incorruptible that ever existed. As a people we breathe the air of liberty. We are free to think and to speak as we please, to go and to come as we will, to work and to loaf at our pleasure, to sleep where we list, and to hang our hats in any city we choose.

Indeed, if we are not already the freest people that history knows anything about, we are rapidly becoming such. If any heckling voice objects that the Frenchman can drink good wine for a low price one might, just conceivably, find a counterbalancing answer in the fact that the Frenchman's mind is still shackled to a respect for law. In this country the law forbids us to take a glass of wine, but the majority have emancipated themselves from that law. Thus, we are free not only to make laws; we are also free to break them.

All these things are helps to happiness, but there are others. As the result of our industry and our moral efficiency we are the leaders in world trade. We smoke the best tobacco that ever was grown (see the speech of Mr. Baldwin on Thanksgiving Day) and we need never fear an embargo on the supply. We rank first among all nations as a compiler of statistics (see the report of the Census Bureau to the Secretary of Commerce) and our superiority in this respect increases every year. We raise the best beef, dig the best potatoes, make the best shoes, automobiles, radio sets, phonographs and mouse traps in the world.

Happiness is the reward of virtue. We are happy. Well?

YULE-LOG REVELRY

IT IS chronicled in the life history of Patrick Donahoe, who did so much for Irish Catholic journalism in Boston, that he nearly lost one of his first jobs—as printer's assistant on the Boston transcript—because he failed to arrive for work on Christmas morning. Old-time Bay Staters evidently held that even a sacred motive could not ennoble frivolity. By comparison the Hessian allies of Lord Howe, who were throttled en masse at Trenton because they welcomed the Yuletide in, seem to us now very worthy and admirable souls. Of them the poet spoke justly when he declared:

> We don't care at all if we're captured,
> We scoff at a chain and a cell;
> With Christmas pleasure enraptured,
> We shall quaff to the cuff of the well.

Today there is Christmas gaiety even in Kansas, where (we are informed) no less a mortal than Ed Howe is wreathed in a smile for the occasion. But has something deeper and more tender than mirth passed from the scene—something enshrined so perfectly in these lines by George MacDonald:

> They all were looking for a king
> To win their wars and lift them high:
> He came, a little baby thing
> That made a woman cry.

Something is radically amiss with the outward circumstances of Christmas observance. It is not primarily the commercial enterprise which stages a monetary cyclone for the month of gift hunting. After all, when this is impartially considered, it reveals a definite and beneficent generosity. The added sale of merchandise, much of which is aloof from the realm of staple products, gives thousands a chance to earn a better wage, and even keeps some from the bread-line. If as a result we give and receive in exchange sundry gewgaws which are of no earthly use, the matter ought to be viewed, perhaps, as a way of furnishing tokens for charity. But of course unless we look, in some such fashion, a little more deeply than the surface, the whole proceeding is sure to become a terrible bore. And if we suffer ourselves to become mere victims of a routine, the end will be envy, disappointment and gross rivalry.

These utterly undesirable characteristics are already, it seems to us, apparent on a large scale. What is the meaning of gaudy and expensive Christmas cards which refer to good health and prosperity under a reproduction, in colors, of the Mona Lisa, or seem to have been designed with a view to illustrating some style of feminine coiffure? Is the modern theatre a place to spend Christmas eve, when one recalls that no room could be found for Mary on the Broadway of Bethlehem? Even the kiddies are now too sophisticated to take Santa Claus seriously, and one wonders to how many of them the vision of the crib comes as an unforgettable experience. In a word, the simplest, homeliest, most touchingly human festival in all history is fringed with complexities, most of them meaningless. Is it because we can no longer appreciate beauty that is without worldly-wise embroidery? Or are our souls too firmly stamped by merely intellectual assents to permit their working out a symbol fully?

Our fathers drank on Christmas day because they were in the habit of toasting every new-born child. They made merry over the Prince of Peace because the birth of any sovereign was an occasion for a feast. Their gifts were recollections of the fact that He had been showered like manna from heaven. And so,

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while the office of the Church, so incomparably lovable and delicately radiant, crowded visions of ultimate beatitude into the antiphons of a thousand choirs, the people—those like ourselves, excepting in understanding—dramatized the event in their own way, so dear to God because He willed it so. But in proportion as we have ceased to overhear the chanting of that office, or have forgotten the manger in which Mary laid her first-born, our mirth has grown hollow and our jests meaningless. And so it is not utterly strange that the most lavishly decorated street in New York at Yuletide should be a thoroughfare almost no booth along which bears a Christian name.

FILMING THE NATION'S MIND

THE St. Louis Post-Dispatch is a great newspaper. Founded a half-century ago by Mr. Joseph Pulitzer in order to give a rapidly developing metropolis a journal worthy of its manifold achievement, the Post-Dispatch is legitimately entitled to believe that its golden jubilee is a genuinely festive occasion. The editors have therefore brought out a special number, the various features of which blend into a positively unparalleled array of names and ideas. If the whole issue is read in sequence, the underlying desire to make manifest the impulses which control present-day civilization is revealed. Here President Coolidge talks intimately about life in the White House. Mr. Wells supposes that America will take the lead in "a synthetic consolidation of the now very scattered and disorganized religious and moral feeling and effort in our modern communities." Religion is discussed pretty dismally by Dean Inge, industrial progress is the theme of Henry Ford, the condition of labor is analyzed by Sidney Hillman, and the tenor of the "modernistic" remarks by J. B. S. Haldane and James Harvey Robinson need not be described to anyone familiar with their work. Since St. Louis is a German city, one is not astonished at finding several serious papers by Teutonic thinkers. Here are Rudolph Holzapfel, deviser of a new dream of culture patented as "Pan-Ideal," and Count Keyserling, chief pedagogue in the School of Wisdom. Last but not least in the long procession comes the illustrious Maxim Gorky.

We believe that all this constitutes a singularly clear photograph of what modern America at least likes to think it is thinking. Many details are striking, others are stimulating. But when we direct the attention of all observant Christians (and in particular, Catholics) to it, the motive is to mete out neither praise nor blame, but to focus the eye upon actuality. First of all, one may observe that the typical city community in the United States is neither New York nor Boston. One of these is overwhelmingly cosmopolitan, the other is provincial in the sense that it is comprised of two populations both of which are imbued with a hunger for traditional values. Your representative community is Chicago, or St. Louis, or San Francisco, in which the approach to ideas and life is often "defined" by a central educational institution or newspaper. And because, after all, impressive similarities link one such institution or journal with others, there exists a kind of "synthetized American intellectualism" which is, at least relatively, the formula of our culture.

Where is the Christian or the Catholic share in this? Not a single writer contributing to the Post-Dispatch symposium is a member of the Church, and several are resolute opponents of the Church. Can the editors be accused, therefore, of having sponsored a variety of attack upon Christendom? Not in the least. Each and every one of these contributors has gained for himself a wide, even an international hearing. All have demonstrated their skill in thought, writing or scholarship. People listen to them because people are looking for pragmatically satisfying speech. And when one reflects that to the Church there has been given a universal teaching obligation, that the sovereign task of the layman is to build up all manner of handiwork in the spirit of the Saviour, the spectacle is truly ominous.

To be sure there are eminent Catholic, or Christian, scholars and writers. But hardly one among them all is bolstered up by the enthusiasm of a great audience. Inside the Church, particularly, a really sluggish indifference to anything which might be termed vigorous intellectual effort has been manifest so long as to be a commonplace. If we suppose that a leading American newspaper wished to include articles by eminent European Catholics in its columns, to whom would it turn? It would perforce have to realize that not a single one of a dozen notable contemporary thinkers has even so much as been translated and published here. It would find out that the one or two who have been mentioned occasionally are known only to some few readers usually considered esoteric by their fellows. Nor is this situation, which is bad enough, as regrettable as the domestic scene. Every rallying-place for Catholic ideas in this country is a one-horse show compared with the circus which follows the country's leading intelligentsia into town.

We cannot expect to lead American culture while even the followers are missing. But one cannot simply shoo them together like so many chickens. Something like a systematic study of American culture from a Catholic point of view, not isolated in an individual study but restated to tens of thousand, is imperatively necessary. At least a few vital contacts with the stream of actual life are desirable. One cannot hide, go golfing or pat oneself on the back if one really cares to push a big job through. In order that a few such reflections may sink into many minds, a careful reading of the Post-Dispatch jubilee number is hereby recommended. This is so very illuminating that we ourselves are grateful for the opportunity to thank the editors and wish them well.

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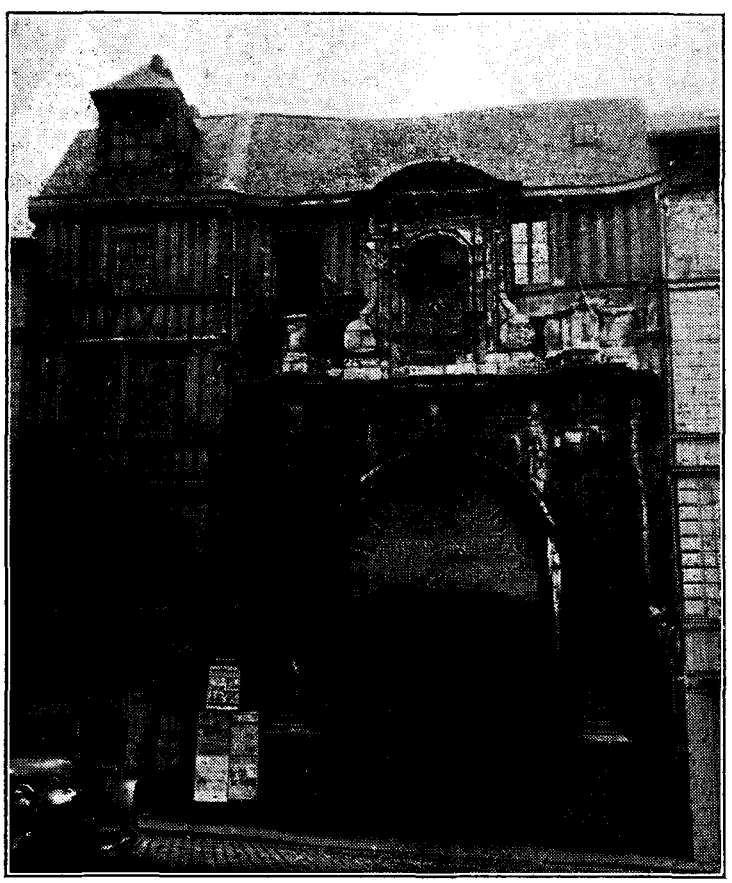
A NEW SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN ARTS

By RALPH ADAMS CRAM

(Is there need for a school of ecclesiastical arts? In the following paper, Mr. Cram answers affirmatively, and outlines a plan for converting the old monastery of the Augustinians, Rouen, into such an institution. The photographs give several views of the structure as it exists today.—The Editors.)

ADMIRABLE as are the schools of architecture in the United States—and there are none better anywhere—there is none that is really conscious of the existence of religion, or that churches are built today. Such practice as is given in ecclesiastical architecture generally comes under the head of "archaeology problems" and so far as I know, except at Notre Dame University, there is none that deals, except in the rarest instances, with a church problem as one of a degree of dignity and importance with a sky-scraper, an aviation field, the residence of an ambassador or a millionaire's villa and gardens on a supposititious island.



In France, whither tradition still holds that one must go to finish an architectural education the situation is still more regrettable, for here, where they do recognize such problems as legitimate, the influence is wholly bad; whereas in America we find a passive indifference in the matter of religious art, here we are confronted by an active inculcation of false principles and indefensible methods.

Nor is this curious obliviousness to the relationship of art and religion confined to architecture alone. There may be art schools that give some training in religious painting and sculpture, but I do not know of them, nor of any studio or atelier where a student with this field in mind can find encouragement or instruction. All the art of today, as this is conceived by educational authorities, is purely secular and based on classical or renaissance principles and motives, with, of late, a pronounced leaning to excessive "modernism" which has no relationship to either. The entire epoch of Christian art, covering more than a thousand years, is ignored except, as I say, from a historical or archaeological standpoint.

What an anomalous situation; now, when more churches are being built than at any time since the Reformation, when the demand for good architecture and art of every kind is widespread through every sort of religious organization from the Catholic Church to the smallest Protestant sect, and at the very time when secular architecture here in America has reached a higher level than elsewhere in the world! Not that the ignorance of the schools results in a dearth of competent ecclesiastical architects. Where they have come from it is impossible to say, but they are here, many of them, and, where fifty years ago there were four at most (and even they not of notable ability) there are now twenty or thirty, all able and conscientious, some of brilliant capacity and achievement.

In the case of the allied arts, the situation is not so encouraging. While stained glass has now, in the hands of eight or ten men, reached a degree of excellence comparable with that of architecture, there are only the first showings of recovery in painting and sculpture, though some of the artist-crafts in metal, wood-work, embroidery, etc., are beginning well. Compared with fifty or even thirty years ago, there is good ground for self-congratulation, especially if one regards other countries, particularly France. Personally, I cannot escape the conviction that there all the arts have suffered eclipse during the last generation but none is in more sorry case today than religious art of every sort and description. The French have never had the faintest conception of the nature of any of the arts in their Christian aspect since the time of Francis I, but since the war they have abandoned their two modes of misunderstood archaeology or platitudinous sentiment and indulged in cubist and technical vagaries that are worse, if possible, than what was evolved here between 1830 and 1880.

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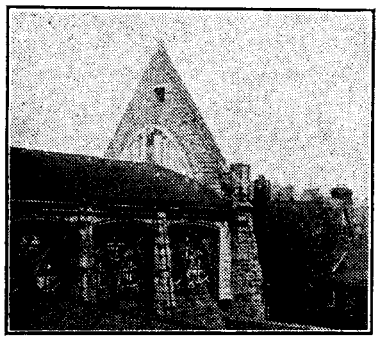
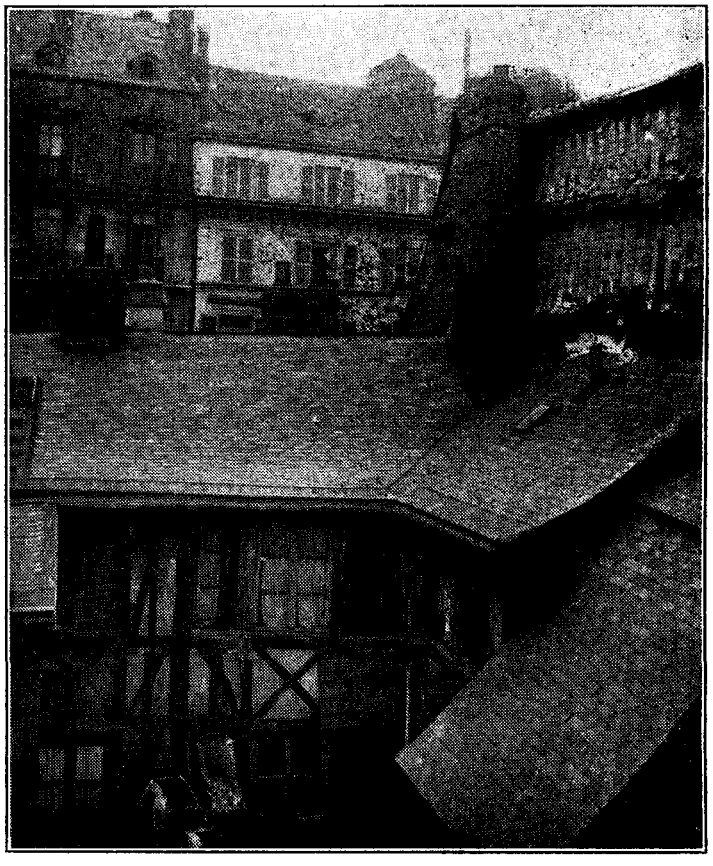


Now religion, and particularly the Catholic religion, cannot subsist without art of every kind. From Constantine on the two were linked in inseparable union. All the Christian art there is is Catholic art, and it was the Church herself that from the moment of her emergence from the catacombs, took over all the old pagan arts, added others of her own invention, gave the old a new mission and a new content, and raised old and new to the highest levels of glory and supreme achievement. The demand for art today is like the demand then, now that, in spite of wide persecution and wider ignorance, the Church shows every sign of a new vitality that must bring her again her old inheritance.

This is no place to consider in detail what should be done, or may be done in this country. Real results are even now being obtained partly by those Catholic schools where Christian art is being taught, even more by those architects who realize the unity of art and are privileged to serve the Church along architectural lines. They are training the Catholic architects of the next generation and, in so far as they can, are fostering the other arts. It may be that this personal influence is better than formal scholastic training, but there is a field that lies beyond that which may be covered by schools and individuals. There is the widespread feeling that what is achieved at home must be supplemented and perfected by a certain amount of training in Europe. As a result, the tendency of the student, whether in architecture, sculpture or painting, has been to enter either the Ecole des Beaux Arts or a Parisian atelier. However wise such a course may have been in the past, the present tendencies in France now argue against it; while for one who was interested in Christian art, it was always an act of folly and has now become, for the time at least, out of the question. Nevertheless, it still remains true that a year or two of formal training in France, combined with wide and intensive travel among the great shrines of Catholic art in Europe, is more than desirable. Granted the basic falsity of the great mass of teaching and practice of all the arts in their relation to organized religion (the few and honorable exceptions in England, Scandinavia and even France itself, do not negative the rule) is there any way out? The scheme involved may be chimerical, but I think the answer is in the affirmative, and thus.

Through the good offices of two personal friends, the Duc de Trévise and the Marquise de Maillé, M. Dubreuil, Mayor of Rouen, has offered, free of all charge, the ancient Augustinian monastery now the property of the city, provided there is established here a school of Catholic arts. The property is a most interesting one. Founded in 1309 it was held by the Augustinian canons until 1790, when it was seized by the Revolution; since then it has served various commercial purposes, and, so far as the chapel is concerned, has been much mutilated, though by no means irreparably. The buildings consist of a great chapel 175 feet long and thirty-four feet wide, with a single nave and high ranges of richly traceried windows of unique design. There is also a great east window now plastered over, all the windows containing small fragments of the original fourteenth-century glass. The great roof of timber has given place to a flat covering of corrugated iron (the original type has been identified from another desecrated church nearby, now a garage, and can be restored) while a floor has been inserted half-way up the walls, so that the structure might be used for storage. There are two side chapels. One of three bays, vaulted in stone and given by Jean Capelle in 1537, is dedicated to Our Lady, the other to Saint Thomas of Villanova. The tower, erected in 1438, has been taken down to the level of the chapel roof. The main building, indeed all that remains of the monastery, is a large four-story structure built about 1775, in excellent repair, containing some forty rooms, and now used as a second-class hotel. The cloister court is now cumbered by various temporary sheds, stables, etc., all of which can easily be cleared away. There are also two fine gateways, one very rich in design, giving access to the ante-chapel



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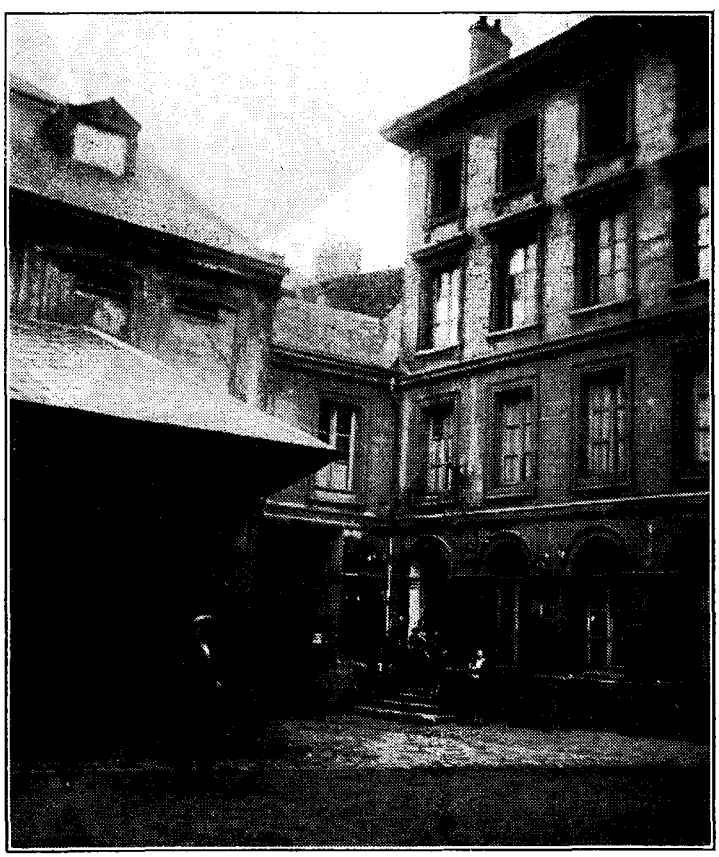
of the monastic church, and built late in the seventeenth century.

The whole place has great charm and greater possibilities, and for its utilization I venture to put this scheme before the readers of The Commonweal.

Let there be established here in Rouen, in the ancient Augustinian monastery, surrounded by all the matchless religious architecture of Rouen and its immediate environs, an international school of Catholic art, open to students of all countries, but French in its foundations and Catholic in its administration. The school would work explicitly and intensively to rebuild the shattered tradition of Catholic art, and the unity in service of all the arts. Beginning with architecture, it would, as opportunity offered, add to itself sculpture, painting and liturgical music, stained glass, wood and stone carving, metal forging, goldsmiths' work, embroidery — indeed every branch of art which has been and should be called in to the service of the Catholic faith. Here students would come from America to live under a sort of simple rule, paying a minimum fee for instruction, board and lodgings, while there can be little doubt that, similarly, students would come from other parts of the continent as well as France, since, with the exception of the Académie de Saint-Luc in Belgium, it would be the only school of the arts which was fundamentally Christian in its foundation and Catholic and ecclesiastical in its instruction. The Lady Chapel could easily be fitted up for religious services and a priest of Rouen appointed chaplain with daily Mass, vespers and compline. As the work went on and many of the arts came to be included, those whose work was worthy would make their contribution to the restoration of the chapel—glass, painting, wood and metal work—while the architects would be engaged year after year in completing the fabric itself and replacing the other buildings now destroyed. There are in Rouen itself several men most competent as instructors; others as lecturers, etc., would come from Paris, only two hours away. So, at a cost so small as to be today insignificant, might be built up here in a perfect environment, a great centre for the recovery and the giving back to the Church of that great art she brought into being and today needs almost as never before.



It is fortunate that the opportunity offers here in Rouen, and not in Paris which is at present no sort of environment for the cultivation of art of any kind, particularly art in its relation to religion. Rouen, on the other hand, is a city of infinite charm, full of great religious art, and lying in the centre of a wide field of equally great art with England, Flanders, Burgundy, and the Ile de France, only a few hours away. This fact is important, for any formal education given in Rouen would be supplemented by constant travel through northern Europe, where the great Catholic art of the middle-ages still exists in much of its glory.

The scheme for this school has the enthusiastic support of the Duc de Trévise and the Marquise de Maillé, of M. Dubreuil the Mayor and his assistant, M. Morin, and also of M. Guey, the head of the Art Museum, and M. Lafond, director of the Journal de Rouen and himself a distinguished archaeologist. As has been said above, the town council will cede the old monastery to such a school as is proposed, free of charge, while it would give free access to the library and the three municipal museums. By the first of the year the old chapel will be free, but the lease on the Louis XVI building has still two years to run, which should give ample time for organizing and financing the proposed school.

Detailed and accurate estimates have been made of the cost of putting the eighteenth-century structure into condition to house about thirty architectural students and provide for their instruction. These estimates include all repairs, central heating and modern plumbing; these amount to $22,500. To this sum would have to be added the cost of repairing and fitting up the Lady Chapel, removing the sheds and other encumbrances in the old cloister garden, properly laying this out, and finally altering the stables to the east to fit them for use as ateliers. Probably $20,000 would cover this, but the estimate is only approximate. No allowance is made for the restoration of the great chapel, which could be left to be undertaken at some future time.

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Complete furnishing would cost a further sum of $9,000. About $8,000 a year would be needed to pay the stipends of a resident head and the staff of instructors and professors who could be drawn from Rouen, Paris and Caen. The fees charged each student would amount to about $750 for forty weeks and would include board, lodgings and instruction.

To recapitulate the financial statement, about $60,000 is immediately needed to fit the school for occupancy, together with an annual guarantee of about $10,000 to cover stipends and wages. The fees paid by thirty students would cover the entire cost of their maintenance. Of course this would provide only for a school of architecture with a maximum of thirty resident students. As schools for the other arts were established, it would mean more expense for ateliers and workshops, also for living quarters, but the cost would not be proportionate to that required at the outset. There is practically no limit to the possible expansion of the school, for adjoining the Augustinian property is another of vast dimensions with innumerable buildings, until recently used as a caserne. This is now vacant and the property of the municipality. This also is available and would provide for quarters, class rooms and ateliers for three or four hundred students. For my own part, I believe that such a school of architecture as I have indicated, founded here in Rouen, would in a very few years develop into a great congeries of schools of Catholic art, drawing to itself students from all over Europe and America, enlisting the financial support of many generous men, and perhaps (why not?) building up once more a great Catholic art for the service of the Church, such as existed in glory during the thousand years of mediaevalism.

And at how small a cost! Only something like $75,000 to establish the school, with a guarantee of about $10,000 per year until the school was fixed on a firm foundation. If it were the success some of us think it would be, within ten years it would be self-supporting, with several hundred students in all the Catholic arts, and with a creative and redemptive influence extending over the whole Christian world.

Is it not a matter worthy of consideration?

THE CRUISE OF THE MARYLAND

By ADAM DAY

IT IS written that the Reverend Rastus Parker Brown, lovingly called Uncle Rastus, told his Birmingham congregation that "the world do move." There was verisimilitude in what he said. Had the Reverend Rastus added that the United States was leading this movement, he would have been more than a mere colored preacher; he would have been a prophet. And, what would have been extremely gratifying to Uncle Rastus, he would have lived to see his prophecy fulfilled.

President William Howard Taft, with some temerity crossed the International Bridge between El Paso and Juarez, shook hands with the Mexican President and hurried back to safety. Elihu Root, statesman, philosopher, rich in honors and not without a penny in the bank, was more adventurous and journeyed 600 mills further sourthward, even to the City of Mexico. Then he went to South America. It remained for Herbert Hoover, President-elect, to blaze the way nearly to the Horn.

Diplomacy took Mr. Taft across the bridge and Mr. Root on his southern journey. Trade, labeled good-will, is taking Mr. Hoover. His trip to South and Central America—and perhaps he will go to Mexico—is interesting, therefore, from an economic and social point of view, and the politics that are woven into it are no less so.

Mr. Hoover's reception in the republics of the south will be comparable to that which President Wilson got in England, France and Italy, where, it might be said, en passant, there were Italian peasants who put Mr. Wilson's picture on their walls and burned candles before it. It is scarcely worth recording that later on these candles were snuffed out . . . but plastic man is the most fickle of creatures. Metaphorically, many candles are now burning before Mr. Hoover's picture; he is giving hope to a hopeful world of trade.

It is not surprising that Mr. Hoover should go to Latin America with a view to bringing the republics of the western hemisphere closer together through better understanding of each other and through greater trade exchange. For seven years he has been so closely associated with American trade that it has become an integral part of him. For seven years he has been thinking, talking and acting in terms of trade. Today he stands at the very head of the big procession of world traders. Prosperity, synonym of trade, was stressed by him as the biggest issue of the campaign that closed with the election on November 6. Now after the approved fashion of modern business efficiency to the nth degree, Mr. Hoover is setting out right at the start to make good.

Were Mark Hanna here, this tacit admission of the entente cordiale between business and politics would warm his cockles. That it is pleasing to Big Business —in whose face Theodore Roosevelt shook his Big Stick, howling against "predatory wealth"—goes without saying. As this is written, nearly everybody is happy.

I modify it wittingly. There are a few, not yet wholly inarticulate, who see not eye to eye with the prophets of prosperity; who see, rather, portents of

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grave moment in Mr. Hoover's southern road trip. They recall that since Mr. Coolidge has been President, the movement by great American business interests for modification of the Sherman Anti-trust Law to permit combinations in foreign trade has received a decided impetus. In the Senate hearings on rubber, Mr. Hoover approved this scheme most emphatically, according to the government printer. He backed up John J. Raskob, Harvey Firestone and other heads of the world's biggest trading firms in urging congressional action to let down the bars put up by the "trust busters" of John Sherman's day, in so far as would permit American combinations in buying and selling in foreign lands.

In the lands into which Mr. Hoover is now going, he will hear an axiom: "poco poco." It means, in effect, "little by little." And that is just what Big Business would do. It would emasculate the Sherman Anti-trust Law "poco poco," until it could be found if at all, only in a glass case in the American Museum of Natural History alongside the other dodos. It might be well for business, for a time; it might mean a full dinner-pail, for a time. Certainly it would mean a throwing away of safeguards against capital that is always predatory—safeguards which were erected after much travail by the crusaders of an early liberalism.

To outward appearances, all this is quite foreign to Mr. Hoover's road plans; yet, in fact, it is quite inseparable from them, since it shows the way the great traders of the United States are thinking, the direction in which they are moving. They are thinking in terms of dollars, and they are moving up a road at the end of which, high on a pedestal, sits the god and prince of usurers and penny-fathers.

Thing of the flesh!—Flesh pots of Egypt!

It is like unto the Jews of old. These were a foolish people, after the foolishness of ignorance, and, when they saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mountain, they gathered themselves unto Aaron and said:

"Up, make us gods which shall go before us!"

And at Aaron's bidding they broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron and he received them at their hands and, with a graving tool, fashioned a molten calf; and they said, these be thy gods! And they danced before the golden calf and worshiped it and sacrificed unto it. And even then, the Book tells, they were naked.

Today trade is the golden calf. Nations and men are bowing down before it, listening not whither the idol leadeth. They preach brotherhood of man, sign pacts of Paris, and, meanwhile, arm, for they know there has been no war in modern times in which trade did not have a hand; in which trade was not a motive. Somewhere in the background there has been a contest for markets.

It is like intoxication, and intoxication is never good. Competition these days is keen and stridulous and of catapultic energy. Now there are many forms of intoxications, one of the least injurious being that of alcohol, which a man may sleep off in the night. Much harder to sleep off is the intoxication of world trade —world hegemony, for that is what world trade means when it is carried to the point men drunk on it would take it. Always it ends in delirium. And the wretches in delirium, be they individuals or nations, have been pursued by dreams more terrible than any Witch of Endor could conjure up out of her cauldron.

Pulpit and press shout today that Mr. Hoover's trip is a big step toward world peace. On the international chessboard of war and peace, the Latin-American nations to which Mr. Hoover is going mean little. The A B C group alone among these republics can be regarded as influential, and its influence is not felt outside South America. No war is threatening on the southern continent, and certainly no South American nation or group of nations is preparing to attack the "Colossus of the north." Therefore this peace talk is just plain buncombe.

Mr. Hoover is going to South America as the way-shower for trade. He is the chief apostle of the new dispensation, and it is Big Business—a thing that is as international as anything can be in this bellicose civilization. It knows no country and speaks every language. Dun and Bradstreet are publishers of its social register. It is able to adjust its affairs overnight to conditions of peace or war and is equally dexterous in playing both ends against the middle. Trade has been the chief god of the Republican party since the principle upon which it was founded—anti-slavery —became obsolete. It has been the bulwark of the Coolidge administration's "prosperity." It took Mr. Coolidge a long time to come out for Mr. Hoover, but when he did it was in no uncertain terms—almost impulsively, if so hearty a gesture could be attributed to him. Mr. Hoover was quick to show his gratitude.

"Trustworthy" and "safe," said Mr. Coolidge of Mr. Hoover.

To whom? To everyone who believes in trade as the only road to prosperity; that only through prosperity—money in the bank—can there be happiness, peace, contentment.

Trade is the greatest of all civilizers. But it has bound more men as slaves to the wheel of labor than did all the rulers of the antique world. It has created new standards of thought, of life—and the end is not yet. The United States is on the eve of the biggest attempt at trade expansion the world has ever known. The efforts of post-war Germany to reach out and capture new markets, and the efforts of the English to meet competition and enlarge the sphere of their commercial influence, pale into insignificance alongside those which the United States will make during the next four years.

Public opinion has been prepared for it—the stage has been set. Propaganda to soothe the consumer and prepare him for an amendment to the Sherman Anti-

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trust Law that would permit combinations in export trade has been skilfully spread throughout the land. There has been much preaching about the same old "full dinner-pail" that characterized the campaign of 1900, when William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan appealed to the electorate for votes. But greater emphasis has been placed in the campaign just closed upon how to insure the filling of the pail, and it was stressed that the only way to do it was by more trade and bigger trade and a tremendous foreign trade; that national prosperity and well-being were bound up in this trade. Complementary to this, Mr. Hoover has started out to make the world safe for American industry, and at this moment it looks as if he will succeed.

Material greatness, wealth and power are transitory. Of old there was a mighty one of earth who made him great works and builded him houses. He planted vineyards and made gardens and orchards and in time were trees and all kinds of fruits. . . . He gathered unto himself also silver and gold and the treasures of kings and of provinces. . . . So that he was great and increased more than all that were before him. . . . And then, at last, when he was surfeited with the treasures he had heaped up by his labor and those who had labored with him, he beheld it—and, lo, even as he knelt before the golden calf, he was naked and a slave.

It is well at seasons to take stock of oneself, and what applies to the individual applies also to nations. Such self-communion—or stock-taking, in modern parlance—is of great importance if it brings a nation to see it is neglecting things of greater significance than mere hegemony. For there are greater things than this. Chief among them is progress, that gives more freedom to man; that circumscribes any power that would oppress, would rob man of the smallest particle of freedom of action and freedom of thought, or place him under class government.

When Apollo reluctantly handed the reins of the chariot of the sun to Phaeton, he cautioned him to drive neither too high nor too low, but to keep a middle course. His advice to his son is good for the sons of other men, even though they be gods. And it is particularly applicable here and now. The Republican party will do well to heed it. Mr. Hoover is driving this nation's chariot, in so far as the administrative government is concerned. He can do as Aaron did of antique times: he can fashion a golden calf and many will fall down before it and worship it and debase the ideals that make for a great nation, rich and proud and free. He can exert powerful influences to cause the enactment of legislation which may for a time bring prosperity and a full dinner-pail, but which will ultimately enthrone wealth and power at the expense of the liberal reform of which Bryan and Roosevelt were early apostles.

There is a middle course for him. It leads to prosperity at home, to neighborliness with the powers of the world, and to peace everywhere. More, it follows an ever-winding highway whereon the growing hosts of liberal reform will be sure to march, since march they must and there is no room for them in the circuitous byway of reaction.

CHRISTMAS IN SORRENTO

By ELIZABETH PATTERSON

WE HAD not meant to spend Christmas at Sorrento, my companion and I. I use the word "companion" solely in the sense of a chance acquaintance on the ship also bound for the Cocumello, and not in the meaning so laboriously employed by Mr. Erskine. That digression is rather lugged in, but my conscience, or my consciousness of the fitness of things, is still reproaching me for having read myself to sleep that night after the Procession of the Christ Child with anything so totally out of the picture as his late exposition of the domestic life of our poor, old, much-abused first parents.

The Cocumello is a hotel on the Mediterranean, half-way around the curve of the Bay of Naples. It is set in a garden of orange and lemon trees, of freesia and primroses and violets, and winding black paths edged with moss-covered stone. Bougainvillea climbs the yellowed walls, and jasmine, and curtains of wisteria. Two cypress trees guard the opening into the square, paved courtyard from the roadway outside, along which one goes a mile to the village of Sorrento. It has been a hotel for 120 years, handed down from generation to generation in the Gargulio family, and it has the air of hoping you will come again but knowing it will get on perfectly well if you do not.

There were about fifty guests there last December, all staying on for Christmas; all caught as we were by the spell of the place; even in December when it was so cool one had to pace quite briskly up and down the terrace over the sapphire sea. All the week before Christmas there had been a stir about the place; a stir of preparation in the deep, white church which is the left wing of the building, and whose low, wide doors open on the courtyard at right angles to the main entrance to the hotel.

Christmas was on Saturday, and on the Tuesday before arrived the oldest of the Gargulio brothers from his home in Sorrento. He began taking a great number of packing boxes into the church and opening them, and starting the setting up of the presèpio, as they call the Christmas pageant in Italy, a much more elaborate affair than the simple crèche of France. The

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presèpio of the Cocumello is a family heirloom. The honor of keeping it and setting it up for Christmas is as jealously guarded by the Gargulio brothers as it was by their ancestors by whom this particular one was designed and made.

They seemed just a great jumble of dolls as they lay unpacked in rows on the stone floor of the church. Each year many of them are broken and Signor Gargulio mends them himself, right there in the church with one old man to help. Wax is produced, and tacks and hammers, and the leg of a horse is adjusted, and a camel's head, and a king's arm is put back, and tiny fruits and vegetables are glued back in their tiny baskets. A platform of green boards was erected before the Blessed Virgin's altar. It took up about twenty square feet of the empty space to the left of the middle aisle.

On the platform they put first the Judean hills, made of heavy papier-mâché, grey and arid, with an occasional palm tree, and flat surfaces of rock, and strips of green for pasture. Mountains loomed up behind, of brown and green stucco. Everyone in the hotel was in the spirit of the thing. At lunch and dinner the first question was of the presèpio.

"How far did he get to-day?" was asked from table to table, and reports of the progress were made.

Houses appeared, with the wife hurrying to the door, and the husband running, shouting the good news; or bending to gather the children to run with him; or piling in his arms the fruits of his farm to offer at the manger. One could actually feel the expectation of it, as each figure was placed in position on its wooden pegs. It had the form of a tremendous procession, coming from both directions and winding down the paths from the hills. In the centre of the foreground, under the lower range of hills, was the cave of the rough stable. There were the wondering ox and ass, the venerable Saint Joseph, his young and blue-clad spouse.

Through a tunnel between two high, stucco hills came the kings, from the east, on horseback with slaves running beside them. Each costume of the hundreds in the pageant was different. The figures were ten inches high.

Italian nobles and knights with their ladies and children were soon defiling down the mountain passes, and among them and beside them and rushing on ahead of them crowded the peasantry of Italy in dresses from the earliest times down to the present day. The sheep of the grazing flocks had their ears pricked up. Dogs were standing stiffly in attitudes of attention, as if listening. One of the Magi had outridden the others. Already he was kneeling at the entrance to the stable, his crown on the ground at his side. His gifts were piled on the backs of his slaves kneeling behind him.

"The first king has arrived," announced Signor Gargulio, as he completed this group. One wonders if there is a legend that one king did get there first.

It made it all the more arresting to watch that middle-aged, handsome Italian, Signor Gargulio, well-dressed with the particular grooming of an Englishman, representing as he did the prosperous, traveled merchant of Sorrento, spending his week before Christmas in the arrangement of those toys which portrayed for him and for his people the finite conception of the mystery of the world. Tightly about his well-nourished body under his coat, he wore a red sweater. His head was bare. The old Italian who waited on him wore a faded black skull cap and a bright green muffler bound high up around his throat.

Everything was finished by Friday noon.

"But you haven't put the Christ Child in!" I exclaimed, standing back to review the work. The clean straw was in the wooden manger. Every figure was in place; the thick, prancing horses, the cows lying down but awake and staring, the sheep, the chickens and ducks in far-off farmyards up the mountains. All were on the alert, waiting; or hastening with such charming suspended eagerness to "the cave where the Child lay."

"The Christ Child," said Signor Gargulio, "yes. It is not the time yet. Christmas Eve He will come. All is ready. He will come."

It was an amazingly prophetic spectacle; amazing in the reality they had been able to put into that silent throng. Every line and angle of the whole was so cleverly concentering toward that empty little manger with its wisp of straw.

Christmas Eve after dinner, as we sat in the long red corridor for coffee, Armando went importantly from group to group.

"The procession will start at ten," he said.

Toward that hour the women began going upstairs for hats and wraps. Interested and curious we were all drifting out into the courtyard. Inside the open church doors was a blaze of light. The tall bishop of Sorrento came out of the hotel in his vestments.

The courtyard was filling with people who had walked out from the village. People important and unimportant were coming in from the neighboring villas. They were hurrying with excited whispering into the church.

We went in the church. Still the manger was empty. Men and boys of all ages and conditions were gathering about the chancel steps. Signor Gargulio was distributing tall lighted candles to them. There was no form about it. It was as natural and unconscious as any family scene. The bishop was kneeling before the high altar. When the candles had all been given out, Signor Gargulio placed in the bishop's hands a small, oblong wicker basket. In the basket, in the swaddling clothes of tradition, lay the pink Christ Child not more than two inches long. The bishop rose and waited.

Two by two the men and boys with the candles got in line and started down the middle aisle. Some of them were the hotel servants, their coats slipped on over their white jackets. Then the bishop came, the little basket carried on the palms of his hands. All in

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the church slowly wheeled and fell in behind. Out into the courtyard we went, the people watching there joining on by twos and threes. It was irresistible.

Not a word was spoken as we crossed the courtyard. The candles began to flare and flicker with the movement. On the procession went, in and out along the black paths of the garden, on down to the terrace above the sea, the lights twinkling through the trees.

There was a crash; a swish of flame, a rocket sped up to the sky—another—another—they were setting off fireworks. In a moment the whole garden was a flood of red lights, Roman candles, rockets, pin-wheels whizzing on their stakes. We were moving in a circle of flame and bursting noise. Late arrivals were running to catch up with us. There was not a sound of a human voice.

On the return we were near enough the front to see the shepherds kneeling at each side of the waiting church doors. Their bagpipes were playing riotously. The candles were gutted and dripping as the men reentered the church. As the bishop put his foot over the threshold the bells began, clashing and jangling in joyous discord. Inside the church the procession spread itself out, swarming into the benches and packing the aisles. The bishop proceeded alone to the presèpio. He blessed the manger. Then he took the china child with its outstretched arms and laid it on the straw. He turned and mounted the steps to the high altar, opening the door of the Tabernacle to give the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Everyone was kneeling or standing. Close beside me knelt an old woman, a veil over her head and shoulders, her face buried in her hands. On the other side of me, kneeling in the stone aisle was a country woman, no veil on her unkempt beautiful hair, her eyes on the altar, her rich voice swelling in the strains of the Tantum Ergo. The bishop was singing. All the men and boys crowded inside the chancel and kneeling on the altar steps were singing. The handsome Gargulio brothers were singing with uplifted heads.

It was over. The Christ Child had come.

The bishop turned and walked, unattended, down the middle aisle to his sacristry at the end of the church. Everyone came pushing up to see the presèpio. The Catholics knelt for a moment before the smiling Child. The strangers hesitated, some with tear-filled eyes; some with a half-frightened, disrupted look on their faces.

It was a quiet evening afterward. No one felt like bridge. Ordinary talking could not get started. I heard a woman say,

"I liked it, all but that awful noise and banging. Do they do that sort of thing at home? Just why the fireworks?"

Little Augustino, one of the corridor boys, answered her. He looked up quickly, his loyalty aflame.

"That was joy for the Christ Child, Signora," he said reproachfully.

When I came home in the spring I took my shoe to our Italian cobbler in my own American village.

"I hear you been Napoli," he said. He is everyone's friend.

"Yes." I said. "I spent Christmas at Sorrento. I walked in the Procession of the Christ Child—you know?"

"The presèpio. I know," he said. His brown eyes grew very soft. He turned his gaze to the window of his little shop. Outside the motors were backing, and honking, and parking in the noisy Main Street. He picked up my shoe from his littered counter.

"For the moment, I forget," he apologized, "Will you tell me again, Signora, what it is the shoe wants?"

CHARLES LUMMIS: AMERICAN HIDALGO

By JAMES J. WALSH

WITH the death of Charles Fletcher Lummis toward the end of November, there passed from among us one of the knightly souls of our generation. Doubtless some old-fashioned Americans were inclined to feel that in his enthusiasm for the Spanish Americans Lummis was as capable as the sad, mad knight of La Mancha of tilting at windmills, but there is no doubt at all that he did more to right a great wrong that existed in the minds of fellow-Americans north of the Rio Grande than anyone else. He knew both Spaniards and Indians and others did not, and he felt that he was born to see justice done to misunderstood people. With this as a mission in life few men of our day have had a happier existence than Lummis, and even thirty-five years ago when I met him in Los Angeles, as the editor of the Land of Sunshine, the first magazine of the Southwest, he went rejoicing on his way to make the world appreciate as he did himself the Spanish Americans and all they accomplished for the transmission of culture to this continent long before the English Americans got around to anything like that. If, in the last days before the end came, he knew of President-elect Hoover's trip to the Spanish-American countries, he must have died the happier for it, because it carried the promise of better understanding on our part in the United States of our neighbors to the south.

Most people think of Lummis as a Californian but of course he was not. He was a Puritan of the Puritans and was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, just before the Civil War, so that he was not quite seventy at the time of his death. He was a Harvard man, and in the biography which he wrote of himself for the American Encyclopedia of Biography he shows his

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pride in that fact. Lummis had a life full of the unforeseen. He was for a time the editor of the Scioto Gazette, in Chilicothe, Ohio; from here, in 1884, he tramped across the continent over thirty-five hundred miles to Los Angeles. He described his experiences in his volume, A Tramp Across the Continent (New York, 1892). The day after he landed in Los Angeles he became the editor of the Daily Times. Luck was with him, as it seemed, and he piled into hard work for his city and Southern California and the Southwest. In less than five years he was prostrated by paralysis, as he thought from overwork, and he went to New Mexico to recuperate.

This seemed to be hard luck indeed but it really proved the making of the man, in finding his mission in life. With health he would have gone on with the hard daily grind of a journalist and probably between that and the opportunities afforded by the growth of Los Angeles might have become wealthy. In that case he would scarcely have been heard of again. His studies of the folk-lore and the folk-songs of the Indians in Mexico and of the Spanish Americans there, gave him new interest in life. He published a series of books in connection with these studies: A New Mexican David (1891); Some Strange Corners of Our Country (1892); The Land of Pocotiempo (1893).

He very soon began to realize how little English-speaking Americans appreciated at their true worth the Spaniards who had been pioneer settlers in the Southwest. He devoted himself then to gathering the materials that would enable his fellow-countrymen to understand their neighbors to the south, as well as the Spanish-American citizens in our own country. Fortunately he was brought in intimate contact with Adolph Bandelier, the Swiss-American archaeologist, who for some ten years had devoted himself to the study of the Pueblo Indians and for a score of years had been making important original contributions to our knowledge of the Mexicans, ancient and modern. Lummis and Bandelier proved cordial companions on many a long hike undertaken for archaeological reasons, and these hikes gave Lummis back his health as well as a new initiative in life.

Then we had the series of books from him which enabled at least those with an open mind to understand how far ahead of the English Americans on this continent the Spanish Americans had been, until the last hundred years, as regards culture and all that makes for the intellectual and aesthetic life. In 1893, when the world's fair held at Chicago had recalled and concentrated attention on what Columbus had done and how much the Spaniards had meant for the opening up of the American continent, Lummis published his Spanish Pioneers. To him, "Spanish pioneering of the Americas was the largest and longest and most marvelous feat of manhood in all history." Unfortunately the meaning of this had been utterly obscured for all the English-speaking Americans because of what has since been called so well by Professor Priestley, of the University of California, our "superiority complex." Lummis said:

> The hopelessness of trying to get from any or all English text-books a just picture of the Spanish hero in the new world made me resolve that no other young American lover of heroism and justice shall need to grope so long in the dark as I had to grope, and for the following glimpses into the most interesting stories he has to thank me less than that friend of us both, A. F. Bandelier, the master of the new school.

As soon as he got settled back in Los Angeles at his work on the Land of Sunshine in the early nineties, he organized the Landmarks Club which was incorporated "to conserve the missions and other historical landmarks of Southern California." A few years later he was proud to report that the Club had kept the historical plaza of Los Angeles from obliteration and preserved some hundreds of the historic street names of the city. Gradually the Club was able to institute such repairs as kept the California missions from disintegrating and preserved their beauty, even in their ruins, as a precious inheritance for future generations. Many friends of California from all over the world hastened to join in this happily conducted enterprise, and the result was a preservation of the missions that would otherwise have perished almost utterly from the face of the country. This organization aroused other groups of people to accomplish a similar purpose. The sincerest of flattery, imitation and rivalry, soon began and was heartily welcomed. Northern California organized its Landmarks Club, and Texas, through the chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, took up the work of preserving its landmarks also.

Then Lummis went on with his work of enabling the English Americans to understand something of all that Spain had accomplished for this country. He emphasized the fact that after the discovery of America, "Spain was the only European nation that did not drowse." He pointed out above all how much these Spaniards accomplished:

> Half of the United States, all Mexico, Yucatan, Central America, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Chile and New Granada and a huge area besides, were Spanish by the time the English had acquired a few acres on the nearest edge of America.

He dwelt on the pioneering of the Spaniards and said that

> one of the wonderful things about this Spanish pioneering—almost as wonderful as the pioneering itself—was the humane and progressive spirit which marked it from first to last. [The reason was that] A surprisingly large proportion of the pioneers in America (Spanish) were college men.

As a result of this, "intelligence went hand in hand with heroism in the early settlement of the new world."

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Lummis knew how much the Spaniards had done for education, and he tried to bring that home to his fellow-countrymen by the declaration "Three Spanish universities were nearly rounding out their century when Harvard was founded." Remember that this expression did not come from a Californian who by chance had become interested in things Spanish, but from a Harvard man and a Harvard man who was proud of the fact that he had studied at Harvard, and therefore all the prouder to give his university its proper place.

Lummis's New England blood led him above all to contrast the position of the Negro in Spanish America with that which he held in English America. After careful studies in Mexico he said, in The Awakening of a Nation (1898):

> There is, by the way, one fresh breath of humanity common not only in Mexico but to all the despotisms, oligarchies and plugged-counterfeit republics south—the Negro is held to be human.

He added, in his own capitalistic way:

> The Man and Brother has far greater rights in all Spanish America than in the land of the free and the home of the brave. . . . Human slavery was never a divine institution in these colonies.

Lummis knew, however, that while the Spaniards were deeply interested in the things of the mind, and were idealistic to the last degree, they could also be eminently practical. He reminded English Americans that

> we thought our overland pony express in the golden days of California a big thing; but half a century earlier there were regular monthly mails, the length of Spanish America from Paraguay to San Francisco, California, a little matter of 5,800 miles.

He added, to clinch the matter, "Spanish America was the first country in history to put the mails on a large footing."

Our Puritan-born hidalgo has gone. What he has written remains. Unfortunately it has not had anything like the effect that it ought to have produced on his fellow-countrymen. Many a university professor since—Bourne of Yale, Bolton, Chapman, Priestley of the University of California—has not only re-echoed but enlarged on the work which Lummis under the inspiration of Bandelier did so well to provide material for a proper judgment as to Spanish achievement on the continent. Still our "superiority complex" persists, and very few Americans north of the Rio Grande are aware that, at the end of the colonial period when Harvard had graduated 2,500 A. B.'s, the University of Mexico had graduated over thirty thousand, and that the published books which are still to be seen in our libraries show how far ahead of English America were the Spanish-American colonies in everything relating to culture until well on in the nineteenth century.

MONET—AND AFTER

By FREDERIC THOMPSON

THE village of Giverny—no railroad station—hummed with the new theory of artistic production, as a small manufacturing community might hum with the news of a new factory.

Papa Monet—as we kids who kicked up the dust of the village street in our games and made labyrinthine tunnels known only to ourselves through the standing corn in the fields, called him—had arrived. Durand Ruel took his pictures and turned them over for a fancy price. Impressionism was the great emancipator. With one leap the tradition with which painting had been executed since its inception in the first dark studio in the depths of a cave had been left behind, the connection severed. Pure color was put in juxtaposition to pure color, the eye doing the blending; the picture came out of the studio into bright daylight; the color scale dependent before on palette-mixed colors with a range between one and ten, say, now soared between one and a hundred.

Monet, with satellites, went out in the fields on the banks of the Ep and painted on four different canvases in an afternoon, as the light changed the color value of the subject. In disgust in the nervous reaction to such temperamental work, he threw some of the canvases into the rushes, and American students after following him home, returned and salvaged them to be the pride of their old age.

In the studio, Monet painted in impressionistic fury and, impressionistic revulsion setting in, slashed with the palette knife two or three canvases. Madame Monet—this is pure gossip but as likely as not—put a stop to the destruction by "snitching" the pictures when they were in the stage just prior to completion, and having packed them off to Durand Ruel, set in their places nice new white canvases for new impressions in pure color.

Other, younger men, not satisfied with Monet's one step away from the method of tradition, took the other and abandoned putting down a recognizable rendition of a subject. They laid on crude colors in juxtapositions that interpreted directly their feelings without roundabout through the visible exterior world. The only loss to art in this was that any ape could do it: man's peculiar quality of reason, sometimes called sanity, was given up; the merits of art could no longer be determined by the quality of artistry.

Contemporarily, French literature, or to localize our impression still more, Paris literature, had its cults of impressionism. As in the paintings, color was sought by juxtaposition of diverse elements rather than by logic's pre-blended mixtures of similitudes. For instance, Rimbaud's vowel poems in which vowels were so many colors.

In these beginnings of impressionism there was a

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vibrant joy in life, in the world, in clouds and sunny meadows, green, lavender, pink, sunlight and beams of light more real-seeming than solids, a touching, ephemeral, scarcely seizable joy of the moment, a joy in things-in-themselves. Instead of the more or less smug exhibitionism of a technique cumulatively refined through succeeding centuries; instead of neat or grandiose machines of plot or structure, the modern, vividly aware of the moment, emitted cries of identification seriatim of perceptions in the original chaos.

To maturing outlooks in the midst of all this the effect was bound to be vividly disorganized. But subjectivism, individualism, the finite creature's infinite variety of point of view and reaction, the bohemianism of the révoltés, in the end all revolved on a simple central tradition. The germ of Rousseau's natural man had fecundated art. Art's nobleman no longer went to school in the studio in the town and copied old masters in the museum or library; he sought the art inherent in himself.

The neat machines of poetry, for instance, with so many syllables to a line and a cash-register ding every so many lines, although undoubtedly mildly diverting, were now held to be rather remote from a far more diverting cosmos. The results of this attitude, the artless irregularities of verse libre and impressionistic prose, were simple subjective catalogues of sensation.

Fun for the artist (self-styled) one might say, but why should anyone else take impressions at second hand? What can be the basis for the layman's interest in art?

There is an answer—impressionism and all its off-shoots must, in spite of all protest, find its canon of value in the artist, not as an artisan but as a character: if he is bold, if he is big, if he is bon, in love with sunlight as Papa Monet was, his art has the associative value of himself; it is educative in his way of seeing; if he is mad like Van Gogh, he is a fellow-voice for the mad; meticulous as Cézanne, calm and kindly as Renoir, pitiful and confused as Verlaine, bouncing and blatant as Amy, studiously and tiresomely determined on a formula that is different as Stein or erotic as Joyce, he or she offers a community of experience. As for art transcending the artist, the fin du siècle and tired instruments that sighed this theory are its best denial. Equally, for an artist to presume a canon of art that shall not infinitely vary for the individual evaluator, is to deny the first principle of all so-called modern art—the subjectivism of an impression, its solitude as well as the solitude of the individual soul.

Hunger

Christ, Who knows all sorrow,
Had more than grief to bear
When He blest the children
And touched a baby's hair.

CAROLINE GILTINAN.

COMMUNICATIONS

A CHRISTMAS APPEAL

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—While we are all living in cheerful anticipation of a happy Christmas, over two hundred thousand of our fellow-men live in the hopeless grasp of leprosy.

Many of these are being cared for by holy, self-sacrificing nuns in colonies under Catholic administration. The lives of the poor lepers are deprived of every solace except that which religion affords. The chief gladness comes to the hearts of the nuns at Christmas time when they see their poor charges made happy by the charity of Catholics at home.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith annually makes a Christmas appeal for the leper colonies. Those who read this may be moved to send a mite to the "human derelicts" who will be happy to receive the crumbs of our Christmas charity, and who will repay the givers by holy prayers at the Crib on Christmas morning.

Offerings for the Lepers' Christmas Fund may be sent to the diocesan offices of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (in every diocese) or to

RT. REV. WILLIAM QUINN,
National Director,
The Society for the Propagation of the Faith,
109 East 38th Street, New York, N. Y.

AFTER THE ELECTION

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

TO the Editor:—The election is over. But it will be some time before the lessons that can be drawn from the election will be exhausted.

An absorbing question just now is, what issue or issues determined the election? Of course we all know what the issues were: the three "P's" or the three "R's," and all the rest of them. Some voters were influenced by one issue, and others by more than one. But the issues as a whole were so many, and told so strongly against Governor Smith that he probably would have been defeated had he been the archangel Gabriel himself.

The current number of World's Work says: "Governor Smith would have lost had he been a Unitarian, like Taft, or a Presbyterian, like Wilson." Yes, perhaps a Protestant Smith running against a Protestant Hoover would have lost the decision, because the other issues taken together might have been weighty enough to defeat him. But suppose—a supposition perfectly in order—that Protestant Smith had been running against a Catholic Hoover. Would the Catholic Hoover have been elected? Most certainly not, for the very good reason that a religious issue, once it is brought home to the people, is always stronger than a political issue. Hoover was elected by the Protestant majority vote, a vote that in our country is overwhelmingly greater than the Catholic vote. If Governor Smith had been running for President against Hoover in Catholic Italy, Spain or one of the South American countries, he would have been elected.

CHARLES HOOPER.

The title page and index for Volume VIII of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume VIII in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

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POEMS

The Tree

What lovely thing is this we see?
A Cross become a Christmas tree—
Its dead wood, buried long ago,
Come up, green-branched above the snow!
Bring in this tree and let us trim
With happy gifts its every limb.
Oh, it is very light to bear,
And good its scent, its color fair!
The Cross that dragged up Calvary,
Comes dancing now, a green-boughed tree!

And One Who bore it, bent with grief—
Oh, miracle, beyond belief—
And One Who, in His youth grown old,
Hung on that Cross, dim-eyed and cold,
Returns to us, a little Lad,
And those same eyes are bright and glad!
One, dead with low men far away,
A Child with children plays today!
And those nailed Hands, made whole and free,
Reach out to bless the Christmas tree!

God grant each crucifying fear
We've buried in our hearts this year
May yield new hope as joyfully
As has the Cross this Christmas tree!
God heal grief's wounds that we may play,
As children, with Thy Child today!

VIOLET ALLEYN STOREY.

Christmas Eve in the Gothic

That lantern lift of seasonable rose,
And relic of pale light from the clear west
On pointed roof and gilded finial,
Look very far.
Trains in the twilight, threading signal gleams
Over the Hackensack meadows,
Note them:
And pompous funnels, newly in from sea,
Blur them with mist, off Sandy Hook, and sails,
Beyond Hell Gate and through the Stepping Stones
Into the early precincts of the moon,
Look back to leave them.

A lantern lifted—
For that long ago,
The world being then very dark,
And cold,
A light shined on it.

Rose for remembrance—
There was no more room.
Only with beasts, and the rude wind,
And dreams
That paid no lodging.

A light shined on it
That will not be
Shut out.

BENJAMIN R. C. LOW.

Shepherds

I sing of shepherds and a silent night,
The sheep before them like a drift of snow,
The frost of heaven has made the shepherds white.
Was ever night so still, or stars so slow?
Yon star above the hilltop glittering
Has never moved since sunset. In a row
The shepherds stand like grave-stones, vigiling.
The dark in which the constellations stand
Is the same dark as antedates all light.
Before all hope, all life, it knew the land.
But suddenly the stars begin to glow.
The heavens are rushing earthward with strange force.
The night miraculous pursues its course.

And now the dome of darkness soft apart
Has opened like the opening of a flower.
A flickering light which makes the shepherds start
Sways at their feet like sunlight through a bower.
They raise their eyes. How fair beyond all telling
Is what they see! The high and heavenly shower!
Music and light and angel-wings are welling
From heaven to earth. Their blood runs in its fear
Like huddling streams in April. To their heart
An angel speaks: "Fear not, for joy is here.
'Tis joy has touched the heavens at this hour.
Joy leaps from hearts, as fountans from a source."
The night miraculous pursues its course.

"Child of the night," the shepherds thus began,
"Child of our hearts"—they had no tongue to speak.
"What can we say?" they speak as best they can.
"How can we tell thee with our words so weak
How beautiful it is to find Thee here?"
The Infant stirred, and slowly raised His cheek,
And from the breast which new-born babes find dear,
Gazed on those humble shepherds of poor sheep.
And as He gazed, joy through the shepherds ran.
It pierced their hearts, and they began to weep.
Behold the tears that down their cheek-bones streak.
They shake with gladness—'tis their love's discourse.
The night miraculous pursues its course.

DANIEL SARGENT.

Blessed Art Thou

To honor the Chosen
Sank Gabriel on knee;
In love of His mother
Leaned God down to thee.

But marvel of marvels!—
How could this thing be!
Not love for His mother
Made Jesus my brother,
But—past understanding—
His love for me.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Major Barbara

BERNARD SHAW is complacent if nothing else—complacent, that is, in the security of his position as a destructive critic and an apostle of the full stomach. In Major Barbara, he has written a play which fairly bursts with complacency, and yet, like Andrew Undershaft's munitions factory, does not quite burst because no one actually drops a lighted match in the gun cotton.

When you have stripped the argument of Major Barbara of all its glittering wit, of all its pleasantly human moments, and of all its machine-gun clatter of sophistries, you find that it says merely this: that a full stomach and a secure job do more for the cause of virtue than all the religions, the priests, the scholarship, the poetry and the heroism of all time rolled together. The seven deadly sins, Shaw tells us, are "food, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children. Nothing can lift those seven milstones from man's neck but money; and the spirit cannot soar until the millstones are lifted." Poverty is "the worst of crimes." These, to be sure, are the words of Andrew Undershaft, the embodiment of capitalism (which Shaw detests) and a monumental "realist." But it is not without a quiet smile that Shaw puts his own convictions in the mouth of his sworn enemy. In this play, he is endeavoring to turn the arguments of capitalism to its own destruction. Shaw means what Undershaft says—and differs with him only in the remedy offered. Undershaft is a benevolent despot. Shaw's own idea is that the state should become an equally benevolent despot, abolishing poverty through the magic of providing secure jobs for all.

Thus it is that Undershaft-Shaw can say: "It is cheap work converting starving men with a Bible in one hand and a slice of bread in the other. I will undertake to convert West Ham to Mohammedanism on the same terms. Try your hand on my men: their souls are hungry because their bodies are full." Shaw can afford to be complacent when he utters such dicta, for the simple reason that there are relatively few people in the modern protesting world who in their own doctrines can find a sufficient answer to his supposed realism. The quota of truth in his statements is painfully obvious; but the quota of falsehood is, one might almost say, a secret matter, hidden in the souls of understanding spirits.

Suppose we put the case against Mr. Shaw this way: the power of the world, represented by wealth or its equivalent, is a trusteeship. Today it is exercised by individuals. Tomorrow, if Mr. Shaw has his way, it may be exercised by the state. But the power itself remains. The difference lies only in the number of trustees, and in the machinery by which they agree to do a given thing with their power. Mr. Shaw has faith in numbers and in the machinery through which numbers can operate. But the truth remains (and Shaw is careful to ignore it) that the good resulting to mankind from any sort of trusteeship depends on the quality of the trusteeship, and not on its form. If men are to live freely under it, the trustees must know in their hearts that the very idea of trusteeship is diametrically opposed to the idea of possession. In other words, they must understand the secret doctrine of poverty of spirit and the sacredness of a trust.

When Shaw complacently asserts that a full stomach frees the spirit, he is stating an obvious half-truth. The other half of the same truth, that a full stomach and full security can nourish man's pride until he think himself greater than God, is no part of Shaw's doctrine. It is for this reason that Shaw is a false prophet. He sees very clearly how embattled wealth can use the Christian doctrine of poverty to oppress the mass of mankind; what he fails utterly to see or to state is how this same doctrine of spiritual poverty can be used to destroy a false trusteeship and to stir men to battle against the abuse of power —whether that power is in the hands of a few or lies in the tyrannous majority of an entire state.

Major Barbara is the first of the regular Theatre Guild Shaw revivals for this season, and is well presented with an excellent cast including Dudley Digges as Undershaft, Eliot Cabot as the Greek professor who turns munitions maker, Winifred Lenihan as the Salvation Army Major Barabara, Helen Westley as her highly assertive mother and Percy Waram as the picturesque Bill Walker who runs amuck in the Army shelter. (At the Guild Theatre.)

A Play without a Name

AUSTIN STRONG, the author of Seventh Heaven, has put together an interesting if not very important play under the above paradoxical title. It is the story of a young couple who have put up with considerable scrimping and poverty in the hope of having the young husband's talent recognized by the firm of bankers for which he works. The senior partner plays a joke on this John Russell at an ill-timed moment by giving an important foreign post to another man and withholding the news that Russell himself is to represent the firm in China. At this, John resigns his job in utter discouragement, goes through all sorts of mental torture, in the course of which his wife becomes almost odious to him, meets a girl whom he had once known in his navy days and gets involved on a more or less wild party with a group of her friends. He even contemplates infidelity, and comes very close to it—close enough, in fact, to recognize that he has at least sinned in thought. Fortunately, he returns to his wife in time to hear the news of his promotion, and to discover in her full understanding the end of his day of self-torture.

There is only one trouble with this play—that John Russell's "temptation" is given with a wealth of detail that smacks of deliberate box-office. This is rather too bad, because in the underlying ideas expressed at all times, the play is unusually sound and free of false values. John Russell goes through a very human and common experience. In her zeal to keep him at work and to make ends meet, his wife has overdone matters a bit. She has neglected her own personal appearance. She has become almost a martinet. John can hardly be blamed for a momentary revulsion of feeling under the apparent shattering of all his efforts. The two selves within him have a hard struggle—and this, by the way, is interestingly portrayed by two scenes supposed to take place within his brain. It is to the credit of the play that his sense of honor and decency win out. It is to the play's discredit that its second act joins the band-wagon of suggestive detail parading Broadway.

The direction and the acting are good throughout. The author himself has staged the play, and Peggy Wood, Kenneth

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MacKenna and Katherine Wilson have the chief rôles. Peggy Wood has certain unique qualities which this play serves to bring out in charming high lights. Among them is the ability to play a girl of fine character without the least loss of charm or emotional appeal. She becomes neither soft nor prim nor unduly sentimental. She remains utterly engaging and interesting at all times. Mr. MacKenna's work has deepened since the days when he was assigned chiefly the rôles of sophisticated philanderers. Katherine Wilson rather helps the tone of the second act by avoiding the more obvious tricks of the vampire rôle. She lets you understand that John Russell's winning of his fight is partly due to a shred of remaining decency on her own part. (At the Booth Theatre.)

The High Road

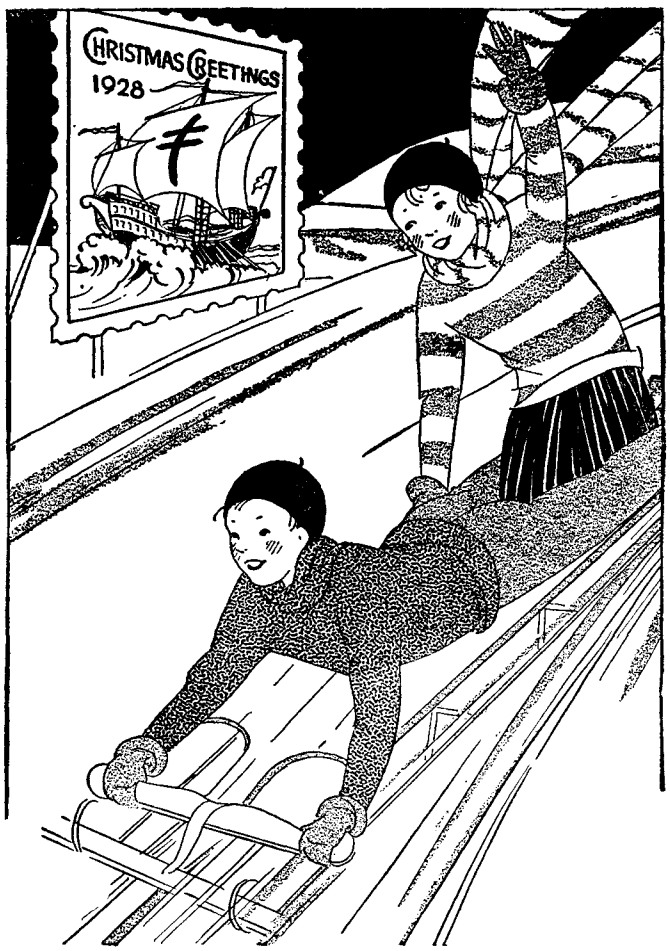
BY AND large, The High Road is the nearest approach to a well-knit and entertaining comedy, seriously underscored, that I have seen this distressful season. It is written by Frederick Lonsdale, which fact always assures amusing dialogue, but is very far from assuring a sound viewpoint. In this case, however, he has mastered his desire to be daringly modern in an attempt to show that there is something more to life than grabbing immediate happiness. One actually detects a sense of proportion and values in this simple story.

A family of the English nobility is much distressed at the prospective marriage of one of its many members to an actress, Elsie Hilary. How Elsie wins them over, one by one, how she discovers that her real love is for an entirely different member of the family, and how she gives him up and returns to the stage when she discovers that a woman he has loved for many years is suddenly free to marry him—this forms the basis of a shrewd, clean-thinking and very human comedy, with an undertone of high-spirited renunciation.

Lonsdale is particularly happy in his clear-cut characterization. The various relatives, lords and ladies most of them, are more than mere types. They live in a spirit of sharp individuality. Lord Trench, as acted by that distinguished veteran, Frederick Kerr, is as fine a stage portrait in many ways as Galsworthy's Old English. James Hilary, Elsie's cockney father, is almost Shavian in his admirably comic proportions, and is admirably acted by Alfred Drayton. That incomparably natural English actress, Edna Best, is, of course, the bright particular star among the younger members of the cast, giving to Elsie an overtone of genuine importance combined with an exceedingly simple and elusive charm. Herbert Marshall, as the young duke who must finally give her up, is a sincere and admirable actor, who knows how to make much of even the smallest scene. The High Road is very far above the average of this season's fare, both in playwriting and in general tone. (At the Fulton Theatre.)

Rainbow

THIS ranking success among the spectacles of the season is described as "a new romantic musical play of California in the days of '49." The story is by Laurence Stallings and Oscar Hammerstein II, and the music by Vincent Youmans. The stars of the occasion are Louise Brown, Charles Ruggles, Allan Prior and Harland Dixon. There is the usual quota of double-meaning jokes and allusions, some quite decent music, many excellent settings with no little atmosphere, and, amazing to relate, a story that approaches a real plot. It is above the average, but in no way equal to that best of all current musical plays, The New Moon. (At Gallo's Theatre.)



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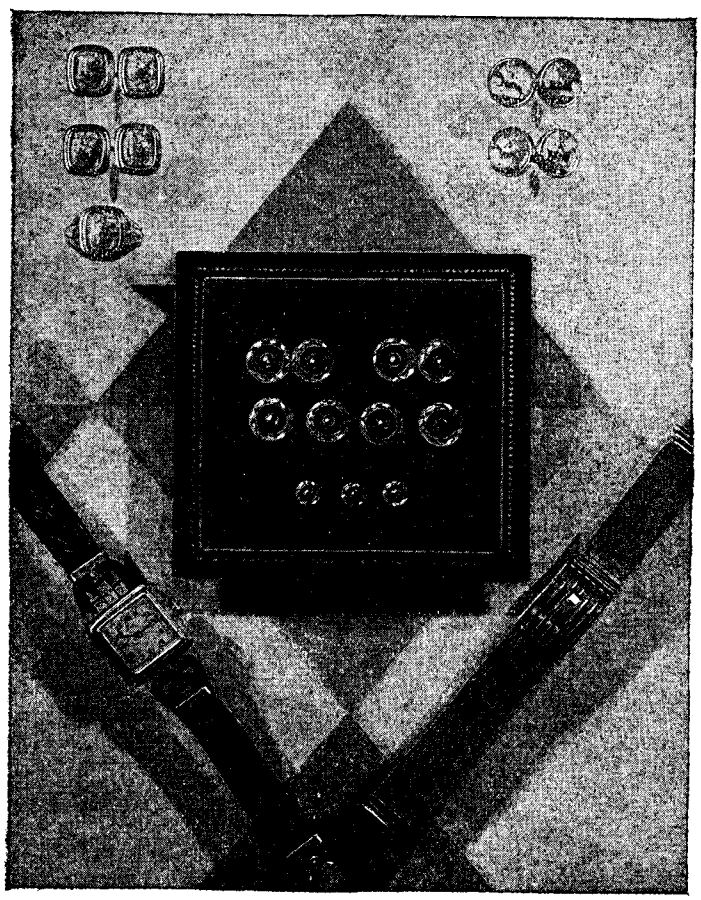

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BOOKS

The Poets, Omnibus

Songs of Eventide, by William Dudley Foulke (Bobbs-Merrill), is a collection of sonnets and lyrics touched with philosophical sadness. There are added two longer poems, Héloise, a study of the lady of Abélard, and a lyrical drama, Maya, on a theme from Yucatan. Mary Austin's The Children Sing in the Far West (Houghton Mifflin), consists of songs composed during a period of many years by this well-known writer of Santa Fé—very superior bits of juvenile verse on the nature and peoples, Spanish, Americans and Indians. The book contains a great deal of the beauty of custom and tradition of the far Southwest. Hafiz; translations of Clarence K. Streit (Viking), is a rendering of the most eastern of the Persian poets, the idol of Edward Fitzgerald and his friend E. B. Cowell. Mr. Streit shows the influence of Fitzgerald's Rubaiyat and gives us a very seemly translation of his Hafiz, appending an account of the poet and his times that will be welcome to the student.

Florentine Nights, by Heinrich Heine; translated by Charles Godfrey Leland (Dutton), from the first English edition of 1927, is a brilliant feat of translation. It gives us Heine's famous stories, with characteristic illustrations in color by Felix De Gray. Willie Lamberton, by Elizabeth Manning (Macmillan Company), a narrative poem in sprightly style of a country love-affair, details a summer flirtation and the consequent triple tragedy. A little booklet of poems, California Fantasies, by Eleanor Scott Beverley (The Poppy Press), is replete with the color and flavor of Southern California.

The Grub Street Book of Verse—1928 (Henry Harrison) is the second annual showing of seventy-six of the newer poets, good, bad and mildly naughty, gathered from the lesser American magazines. There is the usual confusion of excellence and futility that is general in these up-to-date collections. The Lights of Home, by James S. Boyle (Dorrance), gives us the familiar, fireside poems, many of them with a Gaelic lilt, of a poet recently passed away. Light verses by a poet whose previous books were The Changing Flame and Pilgrimage, make up the contents of The Golden Snare, by Sidney King Russell (Vinal). The Sacred Acre, by Rachel Mack Wilson (Vinal), is a slender vein of poetry of the imponderable sort.

The Love Contest, by John J. Carniol (Henry Harrison), consists of three plays, Nature's Toy, The Love Contest and The Kiss Nest, and other plays by an experienced writer for the theatre. Love and After, by Margaret Haynes (Vinal), is dedicated to the futile singing of an evanescent attachment.

Creel O'Ranns, by Gerald L. Zimmerman (Dorrance), contains inspirations of the land and lore of the Gael written down in a rather superficial manner.

A Day of Poetry, edited by Henry Meade Bland, is the book of a day spent on the estate of Mr. James D. Phelan in the Santa Clara valley, by the Poetry Society of the State College of San José. The poems carry the spirit of a lovely scene and a cultivated group. There are verses by Ruth Comfort Mitchell, George Sterling, Kathleen Norris, Clarence Thomas Urmy, Gertrude Atherton, Edwin Markham, and former Senator Phelan proves himself in several songs a poet to be reckoned with. The Poet's Protest, by Angelo De Luca (Henry Harrison), is the voice of a sardonic objector to Amer-

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ica and its unfulfilled achievements, without, however, a single indication of a betterment for impractical idealists. Winged Arrows, by Clara Keck Heflebower (Vinal), is a series of smart cracks in prose and verse by an author known also as "Dee Dee."

Poems, by S. R. Lysaght (Macmillan), were previously published under the title of Poems of the Unknown Way (1901) and Horizons and Landmarks (1911) by the novelist of One of the Grenvilles; and My Tower in Desmond. Quotable Poems, compiled by Thomas Curtis Clark and Esther Gillespie (Willett, Clark and Colby), date as far back as Firdusi and Michelangelo, and come down to the omnibus of modern American and English singers. As an anthology of modern religious verse, this volume will be welcome to the newspaper offices.

The Ultimate Lover, by Marion Ethel Hamilton (Pascal Covici), is perhaps not intense, poignant or joyous enough, but written with a moderated sincerity. The Anthology of Alabama Poetry—1928 (Ernest Hartsock), the first anthology devoted to the poets of Alabama, is issued by the Alabama Writers' Conclave. It shows that as a state the poetic product is honorable with a list that starts with Father Abram J. Ryan and Theodore O'Hara, followed by Samuel Minturn Peck. Later figures in the southern Parnassus whose names have penetrated northward are Lawrence Lee, Michael Kenny, S.J., Louise Crenshaw Ray, Charles J. Quirk, S.J., M. E. Henry-Ruffin, Edith Tatum, Clement Wood and Martha Young. Elegy, by Roy Robert (Bozart), contains poems touched by disappointment, irony and cleverness, that result in pertness without a serious lesson. Clouded Radiance, by Louis William Flaccus (Vinal), is rather better in quality than the average, but calls for no particular note of appreciation.

Poems, by Milton S. Rose (Houghton Mifflin), mingles some fine singing with only occasional banalities. This tiny collection has been made with meticulous taste and some small authentic inspirations. The House of Vanity, by Frank Aukenbrand, jr., and Isaac Benjamin (Liebman), is by two clever young writers without particular rhythm or reason, who conspire in a little book laden with pretentious encomiums and showing its best in its last line:

"Tombstones are God's paperweights."

Stonedust, by Frank Ernest Hill (Longmans, Green), is a collection by a poet well-known in the magazines, writing with a firmness and vision not borne out by some trite illustrations appended to his book. Mr. Hill has too many influences still apparent through his really achieved style to be considered as actually arrived. Ars est celare. Homespun, by Beatrice Joyce (Vinal), strongly shows the human touch. Miss Joyce writes readily, even if a little too easily, and only continued association with the newspaper offices can spoil what is her real gift for song.

The "squeak of machinery" unfortunately makes itself heard in the helpless little book of moods and eccentric kicks entitled Farther Fairer Seas, by Katherine Shepard (Bozart). The spirit is honest but the flesh of it is not well-cooked. Patterns for Pan, edited by Ernest Hartsock (Bozart), is a collection of rather obvious sonnets—anybody can write an adequate one—with good technique and little else. "Beauty is an undying thing," writes Virginia McCormick, reminding us that a thing of beauty is a bore forever. Happily Hannah's Cousin Speaks in sonnet forms by May Folwell Hoisington, proving that there can be humor even among sonnetteers.

Thomas Walsh.

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The Schoolmaster's Son

Franz Schubert: The Man and His Circle, by Newman Flower. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. $5.00.

IT HARDLY seems within the rightful province of a reviewer, "sentimentally inclined to harmony, but organically incapable of a tune," to attempt an estimate of Mr. Flower's excellent work on Schubert. Indeed, a decent honesty would feel the necessity of relinquishing the pleasant task to one of the many better suited to it, were it not for the author's statement in his foreword that his book is an endeavor to portray the man and not to deal with his music. With the comfort of this assurance the biography has been eagerly read, and the review will now be none the less eagerly written.

Mr. Flower begins his book by a chapter on Vienna in or about Schubert's birth year, 1797—a chapter which, it must be admitted in fairness to those succeeding, is unnecessarily inadequate. One longs for a Strachey or a Guedalla, or better still for their great master, Macaulay, to lend movement and vividness to these few and incomplete descriptive pages. The background for Schubert's life is incomparably better built up by the chance glimpses which the following chapters afford than by this disappointing early survey, which is neither well planned nor well executed.

But once we have left the hodgepodge of Viennese life for the home of Schoolmaster Schubert and his sons, we are secure against further disappointment. Through the eighteen chapters which carry Franz Schubert from his singing as a small boy in the Lichtenthal church to his premature death at thirty-one there is not a dull nor yet an inadequate page. And this judgment is made in spite of the fact that at no time is the writing in any sense brilliant or even commanding. The interest of the reader is held rather by the diligence and the pains taken to secure both accuracy and fulness, by the completeness in the portraitures not only of Schubert but also of the members of his circle, and by the appeal in the incidents themselves rather than in their presentation, which, although it is at all times quite readable, is rarely exciting in method.

It would require a far wider acquaintance than that possessed by the reviewer with other biographies of Schubert for one to be able to state definitely the comparative value of Mr. Flower's work. But with the inclusion of the Luib correspondence, never before definitively used in any life of Schubert, and of much intimate material from Eduard von Bauernfeld's Alt Wien, heretofore overlooked, one is safe in assuming the entire thoroughness of his study. Obviously no stone has been left unturned which might bring to light first-hand information, nor has accuracy been spared in the painstaking employment of references. Surely the splendid bibliography, compiled by Mr. William C. Smith of the British Museum, will be a treasure-house to students and lovers of Schubert.

As to Mr. Flower's exhaustive presentation of the man himself, this "giant," five feet one inch tall, one is reminded of George Meredith's ideal of human nature, an individual compounded equally of body, brain and spirit. Thus is Schubert drawn in these pages. No attempt is made to curtail or to gloss over those physical excesses which doubtless caused his early death or to offer at more, or less, than their face value Schubert's delight in those intimate hours with his friends at Bogner's or at the Green Anchor. But as the best proof that his substance was not entirely wasted is offered the fact that in less than fifteen years he composed over one thousand pieces of music from songs to symphonies. His amazing ability to work under any circumstances, poverty, ill-health, despair, the

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resiliency of his mind which continually rose above all manner of depressions, the light of his genius piercing the outer darkness of neglect and defeat—these Mr. Flower has unforgettably impressed upon his readers. He completes his portrait by revealing Schubert's spiritual life, his towering and unshakable faith in God, his love for the Church, his devotion during the last months of his life to his Mass in E Flat and to his Hymn to the Holy Ghost. "Schubert lives with his Mass," wrote his friend Josef Hutterbrenner.

These friends of Schubert who made up his life for fifteen years—the baleful Schober, the four beautiful Fröhlich sisters, the idealist Martin Schwind, the poet Grillparzer—are, with numerous others, well and carefully drawn, and excellent and charming illustrations aid Mr. Flower's pen. But as with Schubert himself, they exist through the relation of well-chosen incidents, through letters and other quotations, and not by the more palpably vivid means of impression and detail.

In fact, Mr. Flower has throughout this thoroughly valuable book kept himself in the background, a rare grace among present biographers. He has allowed a wealth of carefully gathered source material to tell its own story and to fashion one of the great figures of its age. The result is more than pleasing. It is of real and memorable significance.

MARY ELLEN CHASE.

A Bishop Embattled

The Life and Letters of Bishop McQuaid; Volume III, by Frederick J. Zwierlein. Louvain: Librairie Universitaire. $3.00.

THE history of the Church in the United States is slowly being written in biographies. "This volume," writes the author, "completes my work on the life and letters of Bishop McQuaid, which, together with the sketch of Catholic Rochester before his episcopate, gives a survey of nearly a century of American Catholicism. For there was hardly a movement of any significance to Catholic interests in the country at large that proved to be entirely foreign to Rochester. This has already been shown in the first two volumes; it also appears in this third and last volume."

In three sections it deals with Conspiracies, Works of Benevolence, and Ecclesiastical Education. Attention will center on the first of these. Important as were the efforts of Bishop McQuaid to secure full freedom of worship in public penal and eleemosynary institutions, and to realize high ideals of clerical training in his two seminaries, the striking chapters are those dealing with the McGlynn and Lambert cases, the apostolic delegation, and Archbishop Ireland. These are chapters to provoke criticism of the author and of his subject. Dr. Zwierlein has been blamed for writing an inopportune book and one too frank. In other quarters he has been praised for furnishing a corrective to the romantic tradition of Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland. A criticism less debatable is based on the neglect of some archival material which would confirm or weaken the author's hearty vindication of Bishop McQuaid's views and policies, a neglect which prevents one from accepting this as a definitive account of some crucial episodes in American Church history. Again the battles of the Bishop of Rochester against representatives of other schools of thought in the American Church are condemned by many as the mistaken efforts of a self-sufficient, truculent prelate who was neither fair nor right.

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he took to be a dangerous liberalism. He disliked compromise, and his natural impetuosity gave an aggressive, even a bitter, tone to his words and actions. Combative, forceful, too vigorous of speech, too ready to believe evil, all these he was. But if the dangers he feared were real and not fancied, it must be admitted that the provocation was enormous. His battle-grounds were not always of his own choosing, and any minority opinion striving to be heard must often become not merely vocal but strident. If the critical minority in the American Church needed something more bellicose than the enigmatic patience of a saintly Corrigan, that something was supplied by Rochester. And unless a document like the Testem Benevolentiae was tilting at windmills, a critical minority in those days had a function so valuable, so necessary, that its methods or mistakes may well be pardoned. Even intransigentism is wrong only when progress is in the right direction.

JOSEPH M. EGAN.

Mr. Huston Observes

Dear Senator, by McCready Huston. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

LET such politicians as will swap any principle for power buy this McCready Huston a farm on the island of Madeira, or subsidize him to study the political life of Afghanistan. For their own good we recommend that they get rid of him. He is a most dangerous man.

Dear Senator is by no means the usual diatribe against corruption in high places. If it were it could be relished even by those who stand as its targets. For it is hard to see how the Prince of Darkness himself could resist the fascination of a jeremiad, or miss a sermon by Savonarola. The conversions made by Upton Sinclair, Billy Sunday and Sinclair Lewis are numerous indeed—and short-lived. But Mr. Huston, not spending himself in violence, goes about his work with a disarming smile. He does not scorn, he pities these men who cannot win to power without messing up their own lives, and who cannot hold it without messing up their jobs. Pity—what a weapon!

Since this story is in the nature of a report without comment, a statement of a case so terrific in itself that it needs no bolstering appeal, the choice of a newspaperman to tell it was a happy one. It takes an exceptional event to disturb or excite the reportorial mind. When even the death of a President fails to do this, it is not surprising that the devious ways by which a man rises to political eminence should be viewed with an equanimity which turns to sadness only where these manœuvers affect a personal interest in and friendship for the man. So it is with Jim Preston, as Mr. Huston names his raconteur, and Dan Meredith, the magnetic good fellow who is being primed for high office by the powers that be. There is a soft spot in Jim's heart for the young politician, and knowing this the latter cannot understand why Jim should find fault with his position. "Fresh start? . . . You talk as if I was ruined." Enmity he could understand, but not pity. At the end, wounded because his friend will not join him in celebrating his new advancement, he mumbles, half-drunkenly, "'Anyhow . . . I'm a senator. . . . You can't deny that. . . . They can't take that away from me. . . .' He crumpled his napkin and let it fall on his chair and followed me with his eyes. He was standing there in the midst of the crowd, the red fez tilted over one eye. He was still looking after me with a puzzled, almost bewildered expression on his face as I went through the door to the boardwalk."

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We leave him thus, a figure not to be flattered with envy or hostility; an object for compassion. It is an appalling treatment, and even Dan Meredith, clutching for a support to his pride and finding only his new title, would seem to realize it, would seem to prefer any definite onslaught rather than this, this cool pity, this calm dismissal in the hour of his glory.

His final failure has an edge to it which would be lacking if we had not seen him at a time when he could command more than a pitying affection, a time when he had our admiration and respect. But we have seen him round and whole. We have seen him in his family, in his office, and amid his boon companions. We have seen him in comparison with politicians of his own school, and in contrast to a woman with whom he might have gone along to a spiritual independence. She might have saved his soul. In her Mr. Huston has described a memorable creature, for while suffering the real tragedy of Dan Meredith's career, discouragement and disillusion being hers in full, she is capable of going every foot of the way for an ideal, for a hope. She is of a piece with the woman whom Mr. Huston quickly sketched in the last chapters of Huling's Quest, she is that same vibrant and mature woman, under fire.

If McCready Huston were better known, one could sum up this story by saying that it is what he might have been expected to write on the political scene. Since he is not, fortunately too for the peaceful slumbers of the public, it may be pertinent to remark that he is not interested in the eccentric pose, the arresting word, the florid setting or any of the more picturesque externals of life to the observance and marking down of which some of us are within reason devoted. His creed is the integrity of the spirit, and his greatest interest is in studying its fortification or its decline. In this third novel of his we are privileged to watch Dan Meredith climb higher and higher in public favor as everything that is stoutest and best in him rusts away. His judgment is blunted with his conscience; he is pathetically unable to discriminate between a fine thing and a coarse; the man who could once be aroused to perform an utterly unselfish act of chivalry, of heroism, has become a coward in the reluctant eyes of his friends. He resigns himself to the change in the belief that he cannot help himself, that he has been "predestined" to circles into which a nice sense of values cannot be taken along.

All things considered, we cannot believe that the dear senator did not try Mr. Huston's patience sorely at times, and tempt him to ridicule and fury. As it is, this author has a serenity more fearful than the anger he has put down; more fearful, surely, to the politicians. Let them look to him.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Drama in Translation

Bonaparte, by Fritz Von Unruh; translated by Edwin Björkman. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

Tolstoy: A Play, by Henry Bailey Stevens. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $1.75.

ON MARCH 20, 1804, Napoleon gave orders to a court-martial that the Duc d'Enghien, flower of the Bourbon hothouse, snatched from his refuge in neutral territory by Napoleon's men, should be found guilty of plotting against his native land and shot to death. He was tired of conspiracies against his life—the death of Enghien, the white lily, should show the plotting emigrés that Bonaparte was

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master. And following this he would be proclaimed emperor. The Senate was ready; the people clamored for a ruler on a throne, pomp for their pride. The vanity of the coquette, Josephine, would be tickled at being an empress—she might even love her husband for a few days. His brother Lucien would be sorry, probably jealous. Talleyrand would sneer, and scatter encomiums. Fouché would be unctuous, the people would cheer, and lots of colonels would become marshals.

It is this moment that Von Unruh has chosen for his play. The plot arises from the determination of the colonels appointed for Enghien's trial (most of them ardent republicans, with a fire-brand, Hulin, at their head) to save the republic by letting Enghien kill Bonaparte after the mock trial. They have fought under Bonaparte—they love him—but they think they love freedom more. Brutuses. At the climax Enghien faces Bonaparte with the sword of Condé in his hands. The colonels of the court martial wait for Enghien to do the deed. He orates grandly. Bonaparte parries grandly. At the end of the debate Enghien has disgusted the colonels with his "grace-of-Godness," his impotence. He is thrown out. Hulin and the other colonels mock Bonaparte, threaten, abjure; but in the end they do nothing to him. The next morning Enghien is summarily shot and the Senate proclaims Bonaparte emperor. Talleyrand says: "Let us make a note of the date: on March 21, at three o'clock in the morning, Bonaparte ceased to rule over France."

The play bristles with brilliant, subtle lines. The central theme of Bonaparte's determination to be emperor versus the will of the colonels who decide to free France of his domination with Enghien as catspaw, is too often lost in a maze of minor characters and irrelevant incidents; a condition which is not aided by the author's flair for disjointed subtleties in dialogue and for rhetorical declamation at high moments. The author has taken license with fact on a number of supposedly minor points in Napoleon's history. Yet the play is interesting, and offers diversity of study, though it is doubtful if any manager in America will tackle its production.

The play about Tolstoy by Mr. Stevens is adequately described by calling it a centenary tribute to the great Russian. It has little merit except its subject. It fails dramatically because there is no external conflict, no antagonist; and it even fails as a character study because the author, blinded by his hero-worship, presents a placid idol instead of the varied passions of a great soul. The Tolstoy play will bore one within ten pages; but the play called Bonaparte almost demands a second reading for an appreciation of its richness.

HARRY MCGUIRE.

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